

12613. cc

ROSINA:

A NOVEL

ROSLIN A.

A NOVEL

IN FIVE VOLUMES

ROSLIN A.

A NOVEL

LONDON

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE

STATIONER

15, ABINGDON STREET

WILLIAM LANE

ROSINA:

A NOVEL.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF DELIA,
AN INTERESTING TALE,
IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. V.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,
AT THE
Singer's,
LEADENHALL-STREET.

M DCC XCHII.

R. O. S. I. N. A.

A NOVEL

IN FIVE VOLUMES



VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

PRINTING

LEADENHALL-STREET.

1834.

100

CHART 1.

1957-1958

Vol. V.

B

isn't

isn't it the strangest thing in the world, that, as long as I am here, you never once thought of asking after cousin Bob, to know whether he is dead or alive."

"I had a letter myself (replied the Earl) which supercedes the necessity of enquiries I have at present no leisure to make."

"Pray, Sir (said the Duke, addressing Richard for the first time) how is Lord Raymond at present?"

"Stout and hearty, faith. You never saw such an altered man in your life."

"Yes (said the Earl, heaving a deep sigh) by all accounts he is most prodigiously altered. This is a very distressing subject; for, though there is not the least doubt of his recovery, — Mr. Evelyn, if you please, I will ring for a servant to attend you to the door."

"A distressing subject! (repeated Richard.) And why the devil should it be a distressing subject to you to hear that your son's grown strong and hearty. Now, if it was you that was sick, and he that

that was grieved to hear of your recovery, it might be natural enough: but he has no title or estate to keep you out of, you know. It is another guess thing, i'faith!"

"You must allow me to tell you, Mr. Evelyn (said the Earl) that this liberty of speech is very extraordinary."

"I imagined, my Lord (said the Duke, glancing a sarcastic look at his noble friend) I imagined Lord Raymond had been thus long detained in Wales by illness. I am happy to find, from the report of this young gentleman, that his health is perfectly re-established."

"Point du tout, my Lord (said the Earl, not daring to assert such a falsehood in the presence of Richard, in a language he could understand) Point du tout je vous assure: sa santé est dans la situation la plus delicate, et il n'est pas encore hors de danger. Mais pour ce qui regard ce jeune homme-ci, je vous conjure de ne pas ajouter foi a aucune de ses paroles. C'est un fou, un brutal, un boufon, et son coeur est encore plus corrompu que sa figure est hideuse!"

Richard, without understanding one syllable of this eulogium, had penetration enough to perceive the drift of it, and resolving not to be diverted from his purpose,

“ I can assure your Excellency, my Lord Duke (said he) that since the hour my mother bound my head, I never saw my cousin Bob in such a flourishing condition. He has got such a fine ruddy colour in his cheeks, ——.”

“ A sanguine complexion! (interrupted the Earl, shaking his head,) a great indication of a consumption!”

“ Indication of a fiddlestick, (said Richard;) it would do your heart good to see him brandish his knife and fork over a piece of Welsh mutton. I used to be a pretty good stroke myself; but I’m a mere chicken to him when the belly-timber comes in the way.”

“ Another very fatal symptom!” said the Earl, drawing down his physiognomy to the longitude he deemed sufficient.

“ And

"And so it's a sign (continued Richard) what he gets is not stuffed into an ill skin, I promise you. He's grown as broad as he is long. You never saw any one so fallen into fat."

"Fallen into fat!" repeated the Duke, to whom the phrase was entirely novel.

"Aye, faith (continued Richard) he's as fat as a pig, and as merry as a grig."

"High spirits! (said the Earl in a doleful whine,) the never-failing attendant of consumptive cases."

"You know (pursued Richard, still addressing the Duke) what a poor, starved, spindle-shanked, ill-looking whelp he used to be; the very ditto of his noble father here."

The Duke bit his lip, to keep himself from smiling: the Earl reddened exceedingly: and pulling the bell furiously, "Mr. Evelyn, the footman waits to attend you to the door."

"Well, let him wait, that's his business, you know. I can't go until I tell my Lord Duke here a little more about my cousin Bob. It is not every

day that a body can get dukes and earls to discourse with; and I like to make hay while the sun shines. Aye, indeed, as I was saying in regard to cousin Bob, he's grown so stout and so clever, that, by the time he stays a month or two longer in the country, he'll be able to out-bruise Humphreys, and Mendoza, the Jew, into the bargain. But the cream of the jest is, that all this time the cunning dog does nothing but write pitiful letters to his father, making him believe that he is in a galloping decay; and many a kick in his gallop he has, the rogue! And do you know the drift of all this fine contrivance?"

"No, really," said the Duke, whilst the utterance of the Earl was repressed by anger and vexation.

"Why, you must know, my Lord Duke, old Squaratoes, here, has got a wife in his eye for him with a deal of money to her portion. But cousin Bob ———."

Here the Earl's rage and impatience bursting all bounds, he flew to Richard, and seizing his arm, attempted to pull him out of the room; but our little Crookback disengaging himself with a nimble
jerk,

jerk, sprung from him, and running round the room, caught hold of the back of the Duke's chair, and continued, bawling out as loud as he could, whilst the Earl vainly endeavoured to force him away.

“ So, as I was telling your Excellency, for all she is the daughter of some great duke or baronet, poor Bob's chops don't hang much to the match ; and, between you and I, that's no great wonder ; for, though she's so great a lady, I find, by his description of her, that she is no better than a little crooked disciple, like myself, with carrotty locks as red as a fox, and a long fallow mazard, with a pair of little peepers in it, just for all the world like two burnt holes in a blanket : and, between you and I, Bob loves a bouncing girl in the corner as well as any he from here to himself.”

By the time that Richard had concluded his harangue, the sensations of his two noble auditors were almost equally violent. The Duke, who could not possibly mistake the portrait of his fair daughter, hastily as it was sketched out by the hand of a dauber, reddening with indignation, started on his feet, and saying something of an engagement, hastily quitted the room, and crossed the hall, whilst

the Earl followed him in unspeakable consternation, and could only stammer out,

“ I hope, my Lord—I hope, your Grace—I hope that nothing that has been uttered by that damned blockhead, that confounded fool —.”

“ It is said, my Lord, (interrupted the Duke with great sharpness of accent, and asperity of countenance, turning hastily on his heel as he spoke,) it is said that children and fools tell truth ! I shall not, however, fail to acquaint Lady Elinor with the agreeable intelligence of Lord Raymond’s perfect re-establishment ; and also inform her of the very amiable portrait he has drawn of her, for the amusement of his country cousins.”

He descended the steps as he spoke, and threw himself into his chariot, leaving the Earl in an indescribable agitation, or rather agony, compounded of rage, shame, grief, and vexation.

As for Richard, wisely avoiding the storm he saw ready to burst, he followed the Duke out as fast as he could, and left the mansion of his noble relation, elated with satisfaction, and much better pleased with the disturbance he had occasioned in it,

it, than if he had been welcomed with the cordiality and benevolence he had expected to find in it.

He trudged home merrily to his inn, where he amused his valet and confidant with the recital of his adventure.

“To be sure I had high fun (said he) in setting the two pompous old Grecians by the ears. But the unnatural curmudgeon sha’n’t get off at that rate; before I’m a day older I’ll hatch some plot to make him pay for the roast, or I’ll know for why. To think that the ungrateful niggardly old brute would not give me a meal’s meat, or a bed to lie on, or so much as ask me to break my fast, though it was one o’clock in the day, and he could not but know I must needs be hungry. To advise me to take up my lodging at the London Coffee-House, the old ——.”

Here our little Crookback poured out a torrent of abuse and execration too scurrilous and opprobrious to be admitted to fully the chaste page of these sentimental memoirs.

“That was not the way his whipper-snapper of a son was treated in my good mother’s house; he was not packed off with a flea in his ear, hungry and thirsty! The markets were rummaged and ransacked, far and near, to get dainties and tit-bits to cram his greedy maw with: the devil do him good with them! Aye, it’s true enough what we read of the ingratitude of folks in power. I was served just as Gil Blas served the young grocer that came to see him from the country, shoved him out of the room, and clapped the door in his face. And I am convinced they are both of the same kidney, father and son; it’s the devil take the hindmost of them. When they get their turn served, what have they to do but kick away the ladder. But I’ll be upfides with them! Egad, I am beginning to get the rudiments of a precious plot in this noddle of mine, that never was at a loss for one since it came out of the egg-shell.”

We shall now leave our little Machiavel to bring his embrio-project to perfection, and return to the Earl of L——.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

AN ANONYMOUS LETTER.

MORE POLITE CONVERSATION.

ON that disastrous day, the Earl had been engaged to dine out in a large company; but the ill-humour and chagrin occasioned by the vexatious adventure of the morning, prevented him from participating in the gaiety of his companions, and even rendered the pleasantries which, at another season, might have been amusing, most highly disagreeable and disgusting to him. The hint thrown out by Richard in relation to the occasion of Lord Raymond's long continuance in Wales, dwelt on his mind; and, fully conscious of Lady Elinor's deficiency in point of attraction, he became strongly of opinion that he was detained by a prepossession for some more engaging object. Full of this idea,

he retired early, in the intention of venting some portion of his spleen in a very angry epistle to Lord Raymond. On his arrival at his own house, he was presented with the following letter, which had been left there by a countryman, as he was informed by his servants, about two hours before his return. The writing was so scrawled and crooked, that it was not without great difficulty his Lordship interpreted the meaning of the following lines.

And please your Lordship,

These comes from a well-wisher, that, in regard to fartin fevers done by you and your's, to me and mine, would do you all the help I cowl'd, giveing you an account of a damnabel conspirashon lade in Wailes agen the hair of your nobell famillie. I larnt thos serkomstansles from my kuntryman, Gryffith ap Jenkin, and he nose more than I chuses to put on pepper, as likewise his master, young 'Squire Evlin. But little said is soonest mended; and so I remaine

Your humbel sarvante to komand,

And wel-wishsher, tho' unnone.

This

This epistle, in which the reader will easily recollect the style of a correspondent, with a specimen of whose abilities he has already been presented, succeeded to the utmost wish of its malicious inventor, and so strongly corroborated Richard's insinuation, that it threw the Earl almost into a fever. In his dilemma he dispatched a courier, to require the immediate attendance of a gentleman, whose assistance he was accustomed to solicit on every emergency that occurred in his affairs, and to whom he in general remitted the management of them in a great measure. The reader has already been introduced to this person, whose name was Tudor. From the illustrious Cambrians, from whom he boasted his origin, he had derived no inheritance, except an extensive tract of barren mountain and unprofitable quagmire, situated in Merionethshire, in North Wales. In the midst of this dreary domain stood the half-demolished edifice which has already been described as the place of poor Rosina's captivity, and where the race of the ancient Tudors had formerly maintained that species of gloomy and solitary grandeur which was congenial with the spirit of the feudal institution.

This

This retreat was, however, seldom visited by its present proprietor, except once a year, for the purpose of exacting his rents from his tenants, who were in general very tardy in their payments. As he found the produce of his paternal fortune very inadequate to his expences, he was glad to supply them by his own industry, and officiated as agent to several persons of consequence; amongst others, he had acted in this capacity for the Earl of L—, to whom his ability and attention had so greatly recommended him, that he was become his Lordship's prime confidante and adviser in all difficult cases. To him, therefore, he addressed himself in the present emergency.

When the Earl had explained to Mr. Tudor the occasion of his uneasiness, the latter treated his apprehensions as merely chimerical. He observed the little attention that ought to be paid to anonymous addresses; and, in respect to Lord Raymond's long continuance in Wales, remarked, that it was probably occasioned by some frivolous affair of gallantry, which, though it might lead him into some trifling indiscretions, could not be reasonably supposed to involve him in any serious difficulties.

and T

“ At

"At all events, (said the Earl,) it can do no hurt to send for young Evelyn, and sift him in respect to this matter. From the hints he dropped, I have reason to imagine he knows more than he thought proper to discover; and he is such a confounded idiot, that he will be incapable of concealing from my enquiries any knowledge he may possess relative to the affairs of my son."

Mr. Tudor concurred in the propriety of this measure; and a very polite and friendly billet was dispatched by his Lordship to invite Richard to breakfast the next morning; an invitation our little Crookback most readily and joyfully promised to comply with. The Earl, who had given orders for the exclusion of all other visitors, received Richard with singular affability and kindness; and Richard, as if quite elated by this favourable reception, with a simplicity partly natural, and partly affected, entertained his noble kinsman during the time of breakfast with abundance of funny anecdotes, much better calculated for the meridian of the stable, than for that of the drawing-room, to which his Lordship listened with great gravity of attention; but his solemnity was atoned for by the jocularities of Richard, who never failed to laugh heartily at his own merry jests and witty sayings.

"I was

“I was afraid, cousin Evelyn, (said the Earl, when the servants were withdrawn,) I was afraid that you might have imagined that I received you yesterday, when you favoured me with a visit, with less cordiality than, considering your own great merit, and our family connexions, you might have thought yourself entitled to. But just at the moment of your arrival, I happened to be unluckily engaged with his Grace the Duke of B——, in a conference of a nature the most consequential and interesting; and the interruption of your visit occurred at a juncture so *mal a propos*, that I was peculiarly ill prepared to receive you in a manner suitable to your own deservings and my respect. I was, therefore, impatient to obviate any ill impression my apparent coldness might have left upon your mind, and have taken this early opportunity of soliciting the pleasure of your company.”

“O, as to that, (said Richard, who gave to these professions not a jot more credit than they merited, and plainly perceived the point they aimed at,) there’s no need of any apology: for, though to be sure, you did look a little or so grummish at me yesterday, it would be hard if more than that mightn’t pass among such near relations. Cousin

Bob

Bob and I have a hundred quarrels in the day, but we always make it up again."

"I am surprised (said the Earl) that Lord Raymond could determine to remain in the country after you quitted it; especially when he had so strong an inducement to return to London, as the pleasure of your company, during the journey, must have been to him."

"Though I have no reason to mistrust his having a very great liking to my company, (said Richard,) yet, for all that, there may be other company in the world that he thinks still pleasanter."

"What society could he find in that desolate part of the country, (returned the Earl,) which he could be possibly so misjudging as to prefer to your's, except that of your respectable mother or ———."

"My mother, indeed! A likely story, (interrupted Richard.) No, no, if my nose was put out of joint, it was not by an *old* woman, I promise you. Cousin Bob has too good a fancy for that."

"This

"This is very extraordinary! I have been for several weeks expecting him!"

"Expecting him! O, you may whistle for that wind long enough before it will blow."

"How, (cried the Earl,) does he not then intend returning?"

"O yes, I suppose he does; but the devil knows when."

"You surprise me, cousin Evelyn. What can possibly detain Lord Raymond?"

"O, as to that matter, (cried Richard,) I know nothing about it. I suppose, as he writes to you himself, he tells you all he chuses you should know. It's none of my business to let the cat out of the bag. I know what's what better than that comes to. Cousin Bob never did nothing to me that I should make mischief for him."

"Cousin Evelyn, (said the Earl, with great gravity of tone, and solemnity of aspect,) though I highly approve that principle of discretion which renders you averse to disclosing any circumstance
which

which might be a source of dissention between me and my son, I must appeal to your candour and good sense on this, perhaps very important occasion, and ask you, whether you can think yourself justifiable in concealing from my knowledge a transaction which it may highly concern me to know. I am not a severe father, cousin Evelyn: such faults as are prompted by youthful levity, I can readily overlook; and if Lord Raymond is detained by some frivolous attachment, you need be under no apprehension of exciting my resentment to him, by confessing your knowledge of the affair."

"I don't know what you call a trifling attachment, not I, (said Richard; but it's all one as to that. If he marries the girl sooner or later, you must know it; so it may as well out now as another time."

"Marries! (exclaimed his Lordship,) you amaze me! But it is impossible that my son should deviate from the precepts I have instilled into his mind with such unremitting industry. He cannot form an alliance inconsistent with the dignity of his birth. Though he may have possibly suffered himself to be captivated by beauty, and
missed

missed from the particular views I have wished him to cherish, there may be many young beauties in South Wales of high descent, and heiresses of noble fortunes ——.”

“ As to her descent, (interrupted Richard,) it may be high enough ; for she may have dropped from the clouds, for aught I know to the contrary. But as to her being an heiress, I don't know any thing she can have to inherit, except some turnips and carrots, and a jack-ass to carry them to market ; for, to be plain with you, it's a simple gardener's daughter cousin Bob's going to buckle himself to.”

“ Impossible ! (exclaimed the Earl in an agony.) It is impossible that my son could have determined to unite himself to such a base-born wretch, to bring such indelible disgrace on an ancient and honourable family.”

“ Aye, that was what I said to him to a tittle,) interrupted Richard.) What will your noble father say to you, (says I,) when he hears what a fine kettle of fish you are going to make of yourself, (says I,) you that might have had your choice of countesses and dutchesses, (says I,) to go for to bring

bring him home a country-wench, with scarce a tatter to her back, for a daughter-in-law, (says I;) a pretty market you'll bring your pigs to! Don't you know that he is as proud as the devil, and as covetous as a harpy, says I."—"Aye, and that I do to my cost! says Bob. O, a plague upon all old curmudgeons of fathers! What the devil good's in them; but to lumber the world with! But it does not signify arguing the matter; for marry her I must and will, if the devil stood at the door; and let the old codger prevent me if he can, with a murrain to him."

"Cousin Evelyn, cousin Evelyn, (interrupted the Earl with great heat,) you go too far. This is not Lord Raymond's style of conversation. It is impossible that he could have expressed himself in terms either so undutifully opprobrious or so horribly vulgar."

"As to the exact words, (returned Richard,) I can't say that I could be sworn to them; but I know I have given you the pith and marrow of our conversation."

"O, very pithy, indeed! (cried his Lordship; but I shall write immediately to Lord Raymond,
to

to enquire what foundation there may be for this report, and to admonish him ——."

"Aye, (interrupted Richard,) when the steed's stolen shut the stable door. Now, if you had any brains in your numscull, you'd get into your chaise, and whirl off to my mother's, and you and she might lay your noddles together, and hatch some plot or other to prevent this match; for I can tell you, she's devilishly uneasy about it herself; and I know she has a great mind to write to you about it; but a body does not care to make mischief, you know: besides, as he seemed so determined, she thought there was no great good to be done by it."

"I am to the last degree provoked and perplexed!" cried the Earl.

"Faith, no one can wonder at that, (said Richard;) it's enough to provoke any one: and for my own part, I have fretted my guts to fiddle-strings about it; for, though the girl is so handsome and witty, and all that, that's no rule that she should be made a countess of."

"I am

"I am almost distracted! (cried the Earl;) had he even fixed his affections on a woman of birth ——."

"Aye, that was just what I told him, (interrupted Richard.) What a pother you keep with her sense and her beauty, (says I;) they'll make great impression on old Squaretoes, to be sure, (says I.) Don't you know, that, though she was blear-eyed, hump-backed, bandy-legged; though she was as ugly as Mother Shipton, as old as old Par, and as ill-natured as the devil, if she could but post the coal, and reckon you up a score or two of kings and dukes in her genealogy, he'd cry her up for a paragon, and idolize her like a goddess, (says I.)—" Aye, all that's very true, (says Bob,) you have hit him off to a tittle: but, as tyrannical and avaricious as he is, I'd have him to know, that I will take the liberty of chusing for myself, if he was to put his eyes upon sticks for it, (says Bob.) And, what though she be but a gardener's daughter, it's hard if she is not a better stock to graft a noble family on, than the little crooked crab-stick that he wants to buckle me to. But, please the Fates, I'll see him at the devil first! says Bob,"—" But at any rate, cousin Bob, (says I,) since

3

you

you are resolved to marry the wench, hadn't you better tell old Squaretoes how much you are in love with her, and try to persuade him to consent to the match, (says I.)—"Consent to the match! (says Bob;) I find you know little about the old curmudgeon; he would as soon go to the devil. If he was to get the least item of my intention, all the fat would be in the fire, (says Bob.) I know he'll be in a damnable passion. But what of that? He's only tenant for life, so let him do his worst, (says Bob.) Besides, I am in great hopes, that the vexation of this affair may send him packing to the shades below before his natural time, (says Bob,) and so rid me at once of the troublesome old doctard, and that would be a capital hit, faith."

"Horrible and unnatural! (exclaimed the Earl.) And pray who is this wretch, on whose account Lord Raymond has determined to debase himself, and to outrage me; to tarnish the honours of an illustrious house, and return, with unparalleled ingratitude, the tenderness of an affectionate father?"

Richard then acquainted his Lordship with every particular relative to Rosina and her supposed father, which had come within his knowledge: and, to add probability to the tale he had framed, extolled

told her as a miracle of beauty. The Earl took notes of such particulars of his intelligence as he imagined it behoved him to remember, with great solemnity and precision: then addressing Richard,

“ Cousin Evelyn, (said he,) you’ll excuse me if I leave you. I must attend the levee this morning, and it is time for me to dress. Perhaps it would be agreeable to you to amuse yourself for an hour or two in my library?”

“ No, faith, (said Richard,) now that I am here in London, it’s damned hard if I cannot amuse myself better than in poring over your old musty devils of books. Now I think of it, somebody told me our little bruisers were to have a boxing bout to-day: I must go and see about it. Egad, it is not every day a body can have such high fun; and it would be a thousand pities to lose it. So, good bye, uncle.”

He arose and walked towards the door, whilst the Earl rung for a servant to attend him; then returning half way, and scratching his head, and assuming an idiot grin as he spoke, “ And in the meantime, uncle, you that are in power, if ever a fat comfortable place or pension should fall in your

way, or a good post at court, where a body may get a deal of money for doing nothing at all, you see,—why to be sure you'll give the preference to your own flesh and blood, and you won't forget your nephew, Dick Evelyn."

"Oh, no, (cried the Earl,) I shan't forget you; you may depend upon my utmost exertions. But at present I would not for the world detain you."

"Well, good bye again," said Richard, nodding familiarly as he skipped out of the room.

"Fool, changeling, ideot, ape! (exclaimed the Earl, determined to make himself some amends for the restraint he had imposed on himself whilst Richard continued in his presence,) ignorant, insolent, audacious puppy! To abuse me to my face! Was there ever such insufferable folly and impudence! A post! Aye, a post in Bridewell, to be flogged at!—But my son! What am I to think! Whilst I deliberate, his ruin may be completed!

Whilst his Lordship continued to pour forth the ebullitions of his indignation, his contempt, and vexation, in these and divers other opprobrious exclamations, the little mischievous object of his
re-

resentment quitted his house in high exultation, triumphing in the mortification he had already occasioned him, and greatly flattered with the expectation, that the suspicion with which he had inspired him, would send his Lordship packing, as he expressed it, on a wild-goose chase to Wales.

CHAP. III.

THE PROBITY AND HUMANITY OF A COURTIER.

THE Earl, meantime, beginning to make reflection, that, as the evil with which he was menaced still admitted of prevention, he might apply his time to better purpose than in lavishing it in fruitless invectives on a person who was utterly insensible to his resentment, instantly dispatched a servant to summon Mr. Tudor to a consultation: but that gentleman was unfortunately not to be found. Extremely distressed, and dreading, lest the loss of an hour might render his misfortune irremediable, he bethought himself, in this dilemma,

ma, of having recourse to the assistance of a person whose agency he had often found peculiarly serviceable to him on many secret occasions. This understrapper, whose name was Harris, being totally devoid of conscience and principle, readily engaged in the transaction of every dirty job his superiors were pleased to impose on him; and, as the recompence of his services was generally proportionate to the iniquity of the business, the blacker it was, the more willingly he embarked in it. This person, as soon as his Lordship had confided to him his distress and perplexity, instantly suggested to him, that the only effectual means of preventing the odious connexion meditated by Lord Raymond, would be that of spiriting away, and secreting the object of his passion; an achievement of which Mr. Harris very readily undertook the performance. The Earl at first started some difficulties to this plan, which appeared to him of a nature too hazardous and daring; but his objections were over-ruled by the interested eloquence of his adviser, who hoped to derive no trifling advantage from the success of this enterprise. He represented to his noble patron the little danger attendant on the execution of it, and the permanent advantage which would result from its accomplishment. If Lord Raymond is so bewitched

witched as to resolve to marry the girl, (pursued he,) what other means can be found to prevent him? and as he does not know that your Lordship has any suspicion of the matter, you'll have nothing to do but to lie snug, and it will never come into his head to suspect you of having any hand in the matter."

"But the measure is illegal, (said the Earl,) and in case of detection ——."

"At my peril be it, (interrupted the understrapper;) it would be a fine thing if we were to be such slaves to the law as that comes to. Your Lordship has nothing to do but to leave the matter entirely to my management, and I'll engage to give you a satisfactory account of it. The laws, indeed! It will be a meritorious action to prevent your Lordship's noble son and heir from being inveigled by a low-born trull of a gardener's daughter; and let the laws do what they will afterwards: it's hard if we cannot find some way to shove them aside"

The conscientious peer readily acquiesced in this reasoning: and now the consultation turned on the most suitable method of disposing of the

unhappy victim of their policy, after they had got her into their power. Harris gave it as his opinion, that the safest course would be to keep her concealed in some remote part of South or North Wales, until the hurry of the pursuit that Lord Raymond would probably make for her should be over, as their route through any populous part of the country might be easily traced; and that, after some time, when the search was at an end, it would be no difficult matter to have her conveyed privately to some maritime port, and shipped off, either for the East or West Indies, as might be most convenient; or if these plans should fail, she might perhaps be still more eligibly and securely disposed of in some private mad-house.

Whilst Mr. Harris thus displayed the fertility of his resources, to the admiration of his noble auditor, who exceedingly relished his counsel, he was interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Tudor, who had lost no time in waiting on his Lordship as soon as apprised of his desire to see him. The Earl instantly acquainted him with the business of this convention, at which he expressed infinite astonishment.

Mr.

Mr. Tudor's knowledge of Lord Raymond's character, rendered him strongly inclined to disbelieve the report of his intended marriage; and he would have persuaded the Earl to have waited for some more unequivocal proof of the imprudence of his son, before he had recourse to any violent measures.

"And whilst I wait for such proof, (cried the Earl,) the fatal blow may be struck, and the honour of my illustrious house contaminated beyond redemption. And what proof more convincing need I require, than the letter I last night received, corroborated by the testimony of young Evelyn, who, had he the inclination to deceive me, is destitute of the capacity. From him I learn that my son's resolution is irrevocably decided."

"It is strange, indeed, (said Tudor,) if Lord Raymond can have really determined to marry such a person!"

"Strange as it is, (returned the Earl,) is his infatuation without a precedent? Is he the first personage of illustrious birth who has been allured by female fascination into voluntary perdition? Besides, what other motive can detain him in

Wales, in opposition to my reiterated remonstrances and entreaties. No, no, it were weakness to deceive myself in despite of conviction. All that now remains to snatch him from immediate ruin, is to embrace some measure no less prompt than coercive; and what obstacles can be opposed to the meditated dishonour, at once so safe and so effectual as the removal of the cause in which the evil originates. I see but one difficulty attendant on the execution of this plan; and that, I have happily bethought me, your friendship may obviate; the want of a safe and secure place where the girl may be confined for some little time. Pray hear me out, (continued his Lordship, perceiving Mr. Tudor ready to interrupt him;) I don't require you to take an active part in this business: all I desire is, that you will lend me the use of an apartment in that old solitary castle you have in North Wales, which I have often heard you describe."

Mr. Tudor expressed much surprise at this request, and great repugnance to granting it: and his Lordship was obliged to have recourse to all his rhetoric to engage him to compliance.

"As

"As Lord Raymond (continued he) believes me totally ignorant of his disgraceful intentions, he will never entertain the least suspicion of the part I act in this affair; or, should it hereafter become known to him when his delirium is dissipated by maturer reflection, I shall receive his warmest acknowledgments for saving him from the fatal effects of the infatuation which at present enslaves him."

"But, in the meantime, (said Tudor,) what is to become of the girl?"

"What matter what becomes of her! (cried the Earl.) Is that a point to be considered, when the honour of my family is at stake? Better a thousand such base-born wretches should perish, than that a race so illustrious should be contaminated with the least blot of ignominy!"

"But the law, (said Mr. Tudor,) to whose protection the meanest individual has an equal claim with the most noble, will probably give a decision on this subject very different from your Lordship's."

"I am not of a time of life, or frame of mind, (replied the peer,) to be intimidated by bugbears. The law may be a terrific scarecrow to those who are ignorant of the art of dealing with it, or want influence to turn its balance in their favour. I have no time to waste in adverting to future consequences; the business admits not of procrastination. If you will suffer the girl to be confined for a month or two in your house, until the heat of the search Lord Raymond may probably make for her shall be abated, my gratitude for so essential a service shall not be confined to empty professions."

"And what is to become of her afterwards," said Tudor.

"That point may be adjusted at our leisure, (replied his Lordship.) It may not perhaps be difficult to get her settled in some private mad-house."

"And it is more than probable, (said Tudor, ironically,) that the treatment she will receive from Mr. Harris and his myrmidons, will be very well calculated to qualify her for being an inmate of Bedlam."

"So

"So much the better, so much the better, (cried the noble peer,) that would smooth every difficulty at once: or, should that plan fail, she may be disposed of in a convent abroad, or shipped off to the plantations. What punishment can be too severe for the presumptuous arrogance of such a wretch!"

However strongly Mr. Tudor's principles militated against the sentiments of his noble patron, he repressed their dictates; for he was one of that numerous class of men who vibrate in a kind of middle state, who want magnanimity to adhere to those principles of virtue they possess sensibility to revere, and often sacrifice their better feelings to the temptation of avarice, and the seduction of ambition. The conciliation of his Lordship's favour, of which he had already received some substantial proofs, was a point of no little moment to Mr. Tudor; and its consequence was increased at the present period, when his hopes had been stimulated by the prospect of a place of fifteen hundred a-year under government, which, he foresaw, would shortly be vacant, and which, he believed, his patron's interest, if strongly exerted, might readily procure for him. At so critical a juncture he feared to irritate him by a refusal; and

thus rendering his honesty subservient to his interest, he became a party in a business he abhorred, an associate with wretches who were the disgrace of their species, and the tool of a man whom, notwithstanding his wealth, station, and influence, he most thoroughly despised.

Mr. Harris having been furnished by the Earl with the instructions he had received from Richard relative to poor Rosina's name, place of abode, &c. left the Earl, to prepare himself and his myrmidons for the projected enterprize. Mr. Tudor also retired to his own house, full of thought and anxiety, and half repenting the consent he had given to become an accomplice in so infamous a measure.

His imagination perpetually represented to him a young, beautiful, innocent girl, delivered to the absolute disposal of a set of wretches, to whom deeds the most atrocious were familiarized by practice: and his conscience, though not, as we have already seen, of a texture the most delicate, was startled at the scheme of villainy to which he was become accessory. But, as the human mind is ever ingenious in the palliation of its own errors, he silenced its reproaches with the persuasion, that, in rescuing the devoted victim of his Lordship's policy

lity from the power of the wretches to whose conduct she was to be delivered, and affording her an asylum where she might enjoy at least comparative safety and comfort, he rendered an acceptable service to the cause of goodness. It was enough to suffer his house to be converted into a prison, he determined that its walls should protect their unhappy captive from insult, as long as she remained within them: and to this effect, stipulated that she should be entirely committed to his guardianship, so long as she continued to reside beneath his roof. The Earl, delighted with his compliance, agreed to every thing he required of him; and, as it happened to be the season when he usually visited his paternal mansion, he set out without loss of time, loaded with the acknowledgments, professions, and promises of his noble benefactor, to await Rosina's arrival, and prepare for her reception.—The events which occurred in consequence of these measures have been already related.

CHAP. IV.

A COURTIER KEEPS HIS WORD !

THE reader may have traced in Tudor's heart the gradual progress of a passion founded in its commencement on the personal loveliness of Rosina, and afterwards confirmed by the accomplishments of her mind, the discovery of her quality, and the conviction of her worth. But, however eligible the respectability of her birth, and the probable prospect of the fortune she was one day to inherit, might have rendered his attachment, it was combated in his bosom by the conviction, that, from his known connexion with the Earl of L——'s family, an union with Rosina would be imputed to motives the most dishonourable. But naturally warm in his feelings, his passion

sion soon predominated over every other consideration; and as he now conceived the design of rendering this attachment subservient to the purposes of his interest, he no longer offered any opposition to its strong ascendancy. Although he possessed too much good sense to flatter himself that he had inspired Rosina with any prepossession in his favour, it yet never entered into his imagination to doubt her joyful acceptance of his honourable addresses; or to suppose, that in a situation so deplorably hopeless, she could reject an union which offered a restoration to the tenderness of the friends she lamented, to the esteem of mankind, and the blessings of social life. It was to this measure he adverted at his last separation from Rosina. He departed in the intention of making a trial of the influence which the disagreeable entanglement in which his noble patron had involved himself, by the illegality of his proceedings, might afford him; and to regulate his conduct with respect to Rosina by the success of this attempt. In this intention he travelled post to London.

Lord Raymond, meantime, had very naturally attributed Rosina's adventure to the machinations of the Fitzosbornes, who, he fancied, had adopted this method of obtaining by force what they had
failed

failed to effect by persuasion. His vexation and indignation were, however, mitigated by the reflection, that previously to this event he had been obliged to renounce his flattering expectations, and resign all hope of shaking the determined steadiness of Rosina's resolution, which had already baffled all his insidious efforts, even in a situation the most favourable to the success of his designs. He therefore wisely determined to devour his chagrin in silence, and submit patiently to a misfortune which it was past his power to remedy. He returned to London, where his father, though secretly rejoiced at the philosophic resignation with which he appeared to support the loss of his mistress, received him with a most petrific coldness : and to complete his mortification, the Duke of B—— and Lady Elinor, to whom his Grace had, in the first transports of his indignation, repeated his conversation with the little Crookback, irritated beyond measure at the imagined insult, received his advances with the most frigid disdain. But, however mortifying to his Lordship were these symptoms of alienation, as he was ignorant of their true source, and fancied they originated in the resentment occasioned by his long protracted absence from London, he hoped in time to overcome them by a tenfold portion of obsequious attention. For his disappointment

ment in love had served to render him still keener in the pursuit of those honours and riches, from the possession of which he promised himself the most substantial consolation.

Immediately on his arrival in London, Mr. Tudor waited on his noble patron, whom he found filled with vexation and chagrin on account of the ill success of his negotiations respecting Lord Raymond's alliance with Lady Elinor; and the intelligence which Mr. Tudor came purposely to impart to him, was not much calculated to administer consolation. He briefly acquainted him with Rosina's name, quality, and intimate connexions with the Fitzosbornes, who were not unknown to his Lordship; though, for his own private reasons, he suppressed her title to the fortune of her family.

Though already partly informed of these particulars by Tudor's letters, the Earl listened to the repetition of them with infinite uneasiness.

"Would to Heaven I had never embarked in this cursed business! (cried he.) What is to be done! Can you advise me?——"

"I know

"I know no course you can follow with safety, (replied Tudor,) but that of sending for Lord Raymond, confessing to him your share in the transaction, and restoring to him the object of his affection. The young lady may perhaps be prevailed on to sacrifice her resentment, great as I assure you it is, to the prospect of so splendid an alliance; especially as her reputation has been a little cracked in this affair, and that she has not a shilling fortune."

"Surely you jest! (exclaimed the Earl.) Did ever man give such a damned piece of advice! To marry my son to a girl of cracked reputation, inferior birth, and no fortune! I would sooner hang myself than submit to so disgraceful a connexion! No, no, some other expedient must be devised. Now, I think, as your castle is situated so near the sea-coast, it would be very practicable to get her conveyed away to some foreign country, the more distant the better; and I could easily hire a vessel for the purpose; and as she might be conveyed on board in the night-time, and well gagged, there would be no danger of her alarming the country with her cries. I must send immediately for Harris, and consult him on this matter."

"And

"And can you suppose, my Lord, (said Tudor, with indignation,) that I am so lost to principle and to decency, as to connive at a scheme of this atrocious nature! Because, to oblige you, I unwillingly consented to her detention for a few weeks in my house, when I was deceived into a supposition of her being a low-born wretch, who aimed to ensnare the heir of your family in an unworthy connexion by artful blandishment. Now, that I am convinced of the fallacy of such an idea, and find her to be a young lady of respectable birth and superior endowments, can you suppose me to be such a remorseless villain, as to associate with the most profligate of mankind, and become accessory to crimes at which humanity shudders!"

"I meant not to authorize any crimes by my sanction, (replied his Lordship.) You are too warm, Tudor. I meant nothing more than to place the young lady in a foreign convent, where I would have been content to pay liberally for her comfortable accommodation: and as she has no fortune of her own, she would have had reason to thank me for providing her so eligible an establishment."

"O,

And

“ O, I dare say, (replied Tudor, ironically,) if apprised of your Lordship’s benevolent intentions, she would feel for them all the gratitude they merit. But I must candidly tell you, this scheme is utterly impracticable ; for I would much sooner open my gate to a ruffian, whom you should depute to plant a dagger in the bosom of this injured and beautiful girl, than deliver her to the uncontrolled authority of your worthy agent, Mr. Harris, whom I know to be a monster of iniquity, from whose brutal ferocity death would perhaps be the most favourable destiny she might have reason to expect. A little reflection, surely, would have prevented your Lordship from insulting me with such a proposition.”

“ Dear Tudor, (cried the Earl,) I was far from intending to offend you. But you see the perplexity of my situation. Your own reason will point out to you the absolute necessity there is, that this girl should be secreted, at least until after Lord Raymond’s marriage with Lady Elinor, which I have not yet relinquished the hope of effecting. But perhaps some other more feasible project may be struck out.”

“ My

"My Lord, (said Tudor,) no project of an illicit nature shall ever have my concurrence. The loss of your favour may be the inevitable consequence of my determination; but I candidly tell you, that I find the tears and supplications of this bewitching creature so irresistibly powerful, that I can no longer resolve to act in the hated capacity of her gaoler, and refuse her the liberty she eternally solicits."

"How! (exclaimed his Lordship,) is this the return you make for my patronage and protection? for the repeated benefits I have showered on you? Are you too fascinated with this wretch, that has been sent into the world to thwart my measures, and disturb my tranquillity?"

"I confess, (replied Tudor,) I am not insensible to the powerful attractions of this lovely girl."

"Why then, (replied his Lordship with quickness,) why then, since her family is respectable, and her conduct unexceptionable, why then not marry her yourself? I only wish to preclude the possibility of Lord Raymond's union with her; and that point once effected, I shall have no objection

jection to revealing to his knowledge my share in the transaction."

This was the very point to which Tudor had wished to lead his noble patron.

"I should have no objection to the measure, (replied he,) if it could be adopted with any propriety. But will it not be reported in the world, that I have been induced by your Lordship's influence to marry your son's mistress?"

"And are you weak enough (replied the Earl) to sacrifice your happiness and interest to such idle reports?"

"The union in question, (returned Tudor,) however it might contribute to my happiness, would certainly be very prejudicial to my interest. Your Lordship seems to have forgotten the narrowness of my circumstances. I am not in a situation to encumber myself with a family, which I might in future want the means of providing for."

"Dear Tudor, marry the girl, and leave the care of your fortune to my gratitude."

"You

" You will pardon me, my Lord, if, in taking a step of this consequence, I refuse to proceed on so slippery a foundation as the promises of courtiers are said to be, (replied Tudor, smiling.) I must have some more substantial dependence than mere verbal assurances, before I burthen myself with a wife, to suit your Lordship's convenience. Had your interest procured Mr. M ——'s place for me ——"

" Say no more, (interrupted the Earl, instantly taking the hint;) fortunately it is not yet disposed of, and you shall have it. I will set about it instantly; in less than two days the patent shall be completed."

For once a courtier kept his word: two days after this conversation his Lordship presented the patent to Mr. Tudor, who, now at the very summit of his wishes, set out, without losing a moment, to communicate his good fortune to Rosina, and make her the partner of his felicity.

 CHAP. V.

 FRUITLESS EXPOSTULATION.

Her meek rejections wore so mild a face,
More like acceptance seem'd it, than disgrace.

IT will naturally be supposed, that in the repetition of the transactions just related, Mr. Tudor softened every circumstance that might reflect culpability on his own conduct; and though he informed her that a place of fifteen hundred a year had been presented to him by his patron, he suppressed the conditions on which it had been obtained.

“ Good heaven ! (cried Rosina, who easily discovered the origin of her unfortunate captivity in the mischievous pleasantry of the little Crookback)

on

on what insignificant causes do the vicissitudes of human life depend ! the thoughtless author of my sufferings, little imagined how deeply his wanton archness was destined to wound my heart !”

“ Come, come, (said Tudor) it is time you should forget your sufferings ; for my own part I owe the little Crookback infinite obligation, since he was the means of my introduction to you ; greatly as I was captivated with you, (continued he) even from the first hour of our acquaintance, I endeavoured to stifle a passion which the narrowness of my fortune forbade me to indulge ; but now, when that objection has been obviated by the generosity of my patron, what obstacle remains to impede our felicity. In other circumstances I should allow all just indulgence to your maidenish timidity ; but the peculiarity of our situation obliges us to dispense with common forms. Let us be married immediately, and now that I have two or three months to spare, we will devote them to the purpose of visiting your friends the Fitzosborne’s, in Ireland, before our return to London. Speak to me, my Rosina, tell me you approve this measure, and will consent to it.”

VOL. V.

D

Rosina

Rosina sighed deeply, and her tears streamed down her face and bosom.

“Why these sighs and tears! (said Tudor) are you shocked at the prospect of an immediate restoration to liberty and happiness?”

“Alas! (said Rosina) your plan promises me neither! Hear me with patience, (continued she, perceiving his astonishment in his countenance) and if I reject a proposal which I feel it impossible to accept, deem me not on that account the less grateful for your generosity, or the less susceptible of your merit.”

“Reject! (repeated Tudor) are you conscious of the import of your words! do you reflect on your situation!”

“Every circumstance of my unfortunate situation, (returned Rosina) has been so frequently revolved in my mind, that farther reflection is unnecessary. Every rising hope has been crushed—every opening prospect of felicity obliterated! my mind seems to have been rendered callous by its sufferings. I am now prepared to bear the worst!”

“The

"The worst! (exclaimed Tudor) am I then so hateful and despicable, that perpetual imprisonment and persecution, are thought preferable to the honourable union I offer you."

"Neither hateful nor despicable, (returned Rosina) are you deemed by me: on the contrary, I truly love and esteem you—but I cannot marry you."

"'Tis well, madam, (cried he, starting from her in a rage) 'tis well! since you refuse me a legal title to protect you, I have no longer any authority to withhold you from the person by whom you were committed to my charge. I will instantly write to the Earl, and acquaint him with my readiness to resign you to any person he may appoint to require you at my hands. Since my guardianship is contemned and rejected, I am ready to consign you to that of your former conductor, Mr. Harris."

"Can you suppose me weak enough to be intimidated by these menaces? (replied Rosina calmly) I estimate your worth too justly, to believe you capable of a baseness, of which, in the narrative

you have just now given me, you expressed so just an abhorrence."

"Then you build on my own professions, (said Tudor) but have a care—when I made them, I supposed you sensible and grateful; I knew not then your arrogance, your infatuation and inflexibility. Since you chuse your destiny, whatever horrors and misfortunes may await you, the culpability, as well as the calamity, will be all your own."

The weak and exhausted spirits of Rosina could not support the prospect of the new sufferings and difficulties with which she was threatened by the resentment of Tudor. She was seized with a succession of fits, which continued, with short intermissions, for several hours. These alarming paroxysms, so strongly resembling death, filled the tortured bosom of Tudor with consternation and remorse. All his affection was revived by her apparent danger; he supported her in his arms, and in the short intervals of sensibility she enjoyed, poured out the most lavish protestations of fondness, and the tenderest assurances of protection.

When

When she at length recovered, she complained of extreme weakness, and expressed a desire to be suffered to sleep. They removed her to her bed-chamber, where he entreated her to suffer the old woman to watch some hours by her; and as she had by this time divested herself of all distrust, she did not oppose his desire. Before Tudor retired, he approached her.

“ Rosina, (said he) perverse and cruel as you are, I feel that your peace is most dear to me, and your approbation of all human blessings, the highest in my estimation. Dispel then every groundless anxiety; ungrateful as you are, I will never withdraw from you my protection, whilst you wish me to continue it.”

“ I am not ungrateful: (said Rosina) O could you learn to be content with my gratitude, my esteem, my sisterly affection.”

“ Well, well, (said Tudor) cold as are these expressions, I must, for the present, endeavour to be content with them: time may soften this obduracy.”

Rosina shook her head.

“What, (said Tudor, relapsing into his gloom) is it deemed too presumptuous, even to flatter myself with a bare possibility !”

“Well, good night, (said Rosina) we shall find a better season to adjust our differences.”

He retired without speaking.

CHAP. VI.

REFLECTIONS ON DEATH, AND OTHER MELANCHOLY CIRCUMSTANCES.

And hope that points to distant years,

Fair opening through this vale of tears

—A vista to the skies.

MRS. BARBAULD.

L E F T to her own reflections, Rosina looked into her heart for the motive of her insurmountable repugnance to an union with Tudor. But in these

these instances the heart is often perverse in its decisions ; more awake to the impulses of sensibility, than attentive to the dictates of reason, it rejects without hesitation the counsels of prudence, and adheres with inflexibility to its own arbitrary determinations. The bold and impetuous character of Tudor, thrown into tumult by every varying passion ; one moment melted to extravagant fondness, and the next exasperated to violent resentment, was uncongenial with the placid and gentle spirit of Rosina. Love, according to her idea, was the soft soother of the ruffled bosom : a gale that gently agitated the feelings ; not a whirlwind to swell them into tempest. Her bosom, yet smarting with the anguish of recent disappointment, was little inclined to cherish another attachment ; and the boisterous manners and rough familiarity of Tudor, rendered him ill adapted to efface the impressions which the artful refinement, and elegant tenderness of Lord Raymond had left "*aching at her breast.*" Rosina had, beside, another motive for her rejection of the proposed connection. Fully sensible of the decline of her health, she imagined her life verged rapidly towards its termination ; and this idea, far from inspiring horror, was a source of exultation. It is the nature of the mind to look forward with hope. When human consolations

fail, and the shades of misfortune hover around us in a melancholy and impenetrable gloom, this bright and active principle, that faithful as the needle to the polar star, pursues the cheerful beam of happiness, will pierce the incumbent darkness to seek the object of it's aspiration in a serener region—even the region of immortality. Rosina thought herself dying, and weary of a world where even the evanescent pleasures which enervate the bosom, and render it more acutely susceptible to the stings of those misfortunes which mostly follow in the rear, may be termed calamities, death seemed divested of every terror; she hailed it's approach, and rejoiced in the prospect of her liberation. Conscious of rectitude, and trusting in the mercy of her judge, she feared in that sleep of death, no terrifying visions, but beheld it as an asylum from those sad vicissitudes of human misery which neither prudence can avert, nor compassion alleviate. O death! thou best and sweetest solace of the wretched! thou never-failing friend of the unfortunate! where is the bosom of sensibility that has not anticipated thy arrival, and wished, at some interval of wretchedness, to steep its agonizing sensations in thy salutary oblivion!

It

It was late next day before Rosina left her chamber. Tudor accosted her with an air of coldness and dissatisfaction; he enquired how she had passed the night with a constrained civility, and the conversation dropped with her answer.

At dinner she endeavoured to eat, but she found it impossible. Tudor had not before observed all the alteration of her appearance; he contemplated her with disquietude and vexation, and starting from the table, as if in sudden resentment, he abruptly withdrew, and she saw him not 'till night.

Late in the evening on his return to her, he found her sunk into such a state of dejection, that she trembled at his approach.

“How am I to interpret this emotion; (said he, with more gentleness) am I to impute it to aversion or to illness?”

“I have given you no cause (replied Rosina) to suspect me of a sentiment, which could I experience, I must myself be hateful.”

“What credit can I afford to assertions which are so strongly contradicted by your actions! in a
D 5, situation

situation so desperate as yours, what but aversion, the most confirmed and rooted, could influence you to reject a union, which would extricate you from every embarrassment. Is it possible that I can be scorned and rejected on account of a worthless wretch, whose traitorous baseness has been the prime source of all your calamities !”

“ Though rejected, (replied Rosina) you have not been scorned ; neither does that rejection proceed from any remaining partiality for Lord Raymond. If obliged to choose between you, I would not hesitate one moment in my decision : no, though you were poor and friendless, I would not degrade your worth, by placing it in a balance against Lord Raymond, and all the allurements which his alliance might offer to my vanity and ambition. But let us have done with this conversation—it is vain and fruitless—I cannot be your wife.”

“ Perverse, refractory, unaccountable, (muttered Tudor) You cannot be my wife !—and what then—for I would command my feelings—I would argue the point with calmness if I could. What then are your views ? you know my situation ; you know I cannot if I would, release you. My ruin,
you

you must be conscious, would be the inevitable consequence of such a step."

"Well, (said Rosina) since informed of your situation, I have forborne to importune you on the subject. I require nothing more than a continuance of my present confinement; I can now submit to my captivity without murmuring, certain of the approach of a friend, who, spite of bolts and bars, will restore me to liberty."

"What dreadful event do you allude to! (cried Tudor) you are altered, you are ill, my blood runs cold at the idea! but you only speak thus to torment and distract me: yet promise me that you will make no attempt to regain your liberty, and I will send for a physician."

"No extremity (returned Rosina) shall extort from me a promise I mean not to perform. Should any opportunity present me the prospect of a release, you may be certain I shall not hesitate to embrace it; but dearly as I prize my liberty, I cannot condescend to purchase it with treachery and fraud."

“ Impracticable creature ! so gentle yet so resolute ! but I will incur the hazard—I will trust to your gratitude—I cannot see you die for want of medical assistance.”

“ Medical assistance (returned Rosina) in common cases, may do much ; but can it probe to the bottom of the heart—minister to a mind diseas’d ? does the prescription of a physician contain a magic charm—his drugs a lethean quality, to expunge those characters of affliction which are written in the secret foldings of the bosom ? to mental evils, mental remedies alone are applicable.”

“ This is not to be endured ! (cried Tudor) I cannot bear to see you thus !”

“ Leave me then to my fate ; return to London ; endeavour to forget me ; let amusement conspire with business to banish me from your thoughts. I have but one request to make ; I have not yet acquired philosophy enough to consent that my reputation should be left the prey of malevolence ; let the letters I shall leave be delivered.”——

“ By heaven this is too much !” (exclaimed Tudor in a rage), but this language is adopted to drive
me

me to desperation ! yet why not comply with your desire ! why not abandon you to your fate, when even death is thought preferable to my tenderness ! yes, let it be so—to-morrow I will leave you—I will forget you, since you desire it, or remember nothing but your ingratitude, your obstinacy, and perverseness !”

Rosina, terrified at his violence, retired to her chamber, and saw him no more 'till the following day.

CHAP. VII.

HONOUR TRIUMPHANT.

We've read that things inanimate have mov'd,
 And, as with living souls, have been inspir'd
 By magic numbers, and persuasive sound.

CONGREVE.

TUDOR's countenance the next morning was dark and sullen; he did not speak, and after breakfast left the castle on foot, and returned not 'till late in the evening.

Rosina's spirits now recovered from the agitation into which they had been thrown by Tudor's arrival, and his subsequent conduct were once more sunk into the melancholy gloom of hopeless dependency.

spondency. Her doom, she imagined, was now finally determined; her bosom peace destroyed; her reputation blasted; her constitution, as she was persuaded, mortally impaired; what would it have availed to consent to a marriage, against which the feelings of her heart revolted with an unconquerable repugnance; a marriage, which could neither restore her to reputation, to tranquillity, or to health.

Late in the evening she sat at her window; Tudor was not yet returned; the moon beams glanced through the ivy that hung from the battlements of the castle; she sat listening to the murmurs of the cataract, and contemplating the white mists that waved over the surrounding mountains. The solemn serenity of the scene tranquillized her mind. Her breast was expanded with devotion; she felt the vanity of human pursuits, and the insignificance of human attainments. She sung several hymns, and her voice, which was at first feeble and tremulous, acquired strength from it's exertion. She had just begun a hymn to hope, when Tudor appeared at the door of the apartment. She stopped.

"I am

“ I am glad you have spirits to sing, (said he) let me not interrupt you. I have often experienced the efficacy of music in soothing the perturbation of mental disquietude, and never was that soothing influence more requisite than at this moment.— Pray begin that air again.”

He seated himself near the window, and crossing his arms over his breast, prepared to listen whilst Rosina sung.

HYMN TO HOPE.

O hope, thou sweet benignant power !

Descended from above ;

And sent by heaven to lost mankind,

On errands full of love.

Alas ! no more thy beamy star

Illumes my dreary way ;

For disappointment's frequent tear

Has quench'd the silver ray.

Bright angel ! sent by fate to cheer

Life's more than wintry glooms,

And strew midst sorrows sharpest thorns

Thy visionary blooms.

How

How sweetly glow'd the opening buds
In fancy's vernal morn !
I stretch'd my hand to pluck the flower,
But felt the piercing thorn !

Though oft allur'd, as oft deceiv'd,
But now the charm is o'er ;
The dream is fled—the scene is clos'd,
And hope enchants no more !

Yet oft at midnight's awful hour,
When *noise* and *tumult* cease ;
She deigns to hover o'er my couch,
And whispers sacred peace.

Not as when erst in fancy's morn,
She met my raptur'd view ;
When fluttering round her radiant form,
The bright idea's flew.

A varied crest of Indian plumes
Play'd o'er her *laughing* brow ;
Her robe a *sun-gilt western cloud*,
Her zone th'etherial bow.

Now round her flows a vestal *stole*
Of pure unsullied white ;

And

And fair Elysian blooms *enwreath*

Her brow, serenely bright.

Her hand a silver lamp displays,

To cheer the awful gloom;

She treads the damp vault's dreary maze,

And leads me to the tomb.

She bids it ope its marble jaws,

To take me to its breast;

For there the troublous spirits cease!

And there the weary rest!

Whilst Rosina sung, Tudor struggled with his emotion; he started up when she concluded, and flying to her, flung himself on his knees at her feet, and caught both her hands.

“Rosina, (cried he in interrupted accents) Rosina, you have conquered! your prison is unbarred from this moment. To see you die—merciful heaven! to become accessory to your murder! to lay up for myself hoards of eternal horror and remorse—days of wretchedness, and nights of despair!—I make no conditions—I no longer detain you; go where and when you please!”

“O Tudor,

"O Tudor, (cried Rosina, deeply affected, trembling with emotion, and afraid too suddenly to cherish the hope his words inspired) O Tudor, can you act thus nobly, and shall I be less disinterested! you said my liberation would destroy your fortune, subject you to the indignation of your patron; can I then consent to return your generosity with injury, your tenderness with ruin!"

"No matter, (returned Tudor) I am now prepared to brave every evil, but the consciousness of having been instrumental to your destruction. Cursed, cursed be the moment, when I suffered the mean suggestions of interest to silence the dictates of honour and conscience, which so powerfully revolted against this infamous conspiracy! but I am now justly punished for my base servility. Rosina, you are in the right to reject me; I am unworthy to possess you!"

"Oh how unjust (said Rosina) is this self accusation! have you not been my truest friend, my best benefactor? did not your humanity snatch me from the power of the most abandoned of mankind. You have been my guardian angel, commissioned by heaven to save me from destruction!"

Rosina,

Rosina, in the lavish prodigality of gratitude, could almost have promised Tudor a compliance with every wish of his heart; but the consideration of her weak and declining state of health, restrained her: she imagined her constitution was more exhausted than it really was, and doubted whether she had remaining strength to enable her to bear the fatigue of a journey to Ireland. To flatter him with a hope, which she believed could never be realized, would have been, she thought, a cruel kindness, more injurious to his repose than the most confirmed indifference.

“ Since we must separate, (said Tudor) let it be immediately; to-morrow I will myself conduct you to Holyhead.”

“ To-morrow; (said Rosina) what necessity for this precipitation? I would fain stay a little longer—I would fain express my gratitude, and reconcile you to my departure.”

“ If you would reconcile me to your departure, (said Tudor) be consistent with yourself; treat me with your accustomed coldness; I cannot bear this relenting softness—this appearance of tenderness,
which

which is foreign to your heart—tell me you despise and hate me !”

“ Never (said Rosina) shall my lips pronounce so black a falsehood. Is there no mean between antipathy and fondness ! is there not a tender esteem—a grateful affection, which the heart may share with many, though one alone can possess its supreme attachment.”

“ Well, well, (said Tudor) let us have done with this subject, never more to resume it. You do not, you cannot love me, and with this strong conviction on my mind, it would contribute little to my happiness, were your gratitude to offer me the tribute which your heart denies me. I am jealous and fiery, irrational in my passion, and inconsiderate in my resentment ; to possess your hand without your heart, would open a prolific source of future infelicity—heap coals of fire on my head, and plant thorns in my bosom. Go then, Rosina, return to your friends, recover your health, and let one of us at least be happy. I have revolved this plan these two days ; many struggles I confess it has cost me, but your triumph is now complete. Early to-morrow we will depart ; delays may be fatal to your health, and can contribute nothing to my

my repose. Good night; I go to prepare for our journey; I shall see you no more 'till to-morrow."

"And will you leave me; (said Rosina, hastily catching his hand as he arose) will you leave me without suffering me to express my gratitude for your kindness—my astonishment at your generosity!"

"No, no, Rosina, (said he, hastily disengaging himself from her) repress them, they are ineffectual; nay, worse; they inspire feelings too impetuous, regrets too piercing! good night, good night." He rushed from her as he spoke.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

THE EMULATION OF HONOUR.

ROSINA felt her bosom torn by sensations so painful, that even the melancholy serenity she had enjoyed in her confinement previous to Tudor's last return to her, seemed enviable in comparison to the conflicts by which she was now distracted.

She was summoned very early in the morning; she found Tudor already booted; but his hollow eyes, and the gloomy wildness of his countenance, proclaimed the disorder of his mind.

"Still in tears Rosina! (said he) for once, at least, I flattered myself with the hope of beholding
your

your countenance drest in smiles of joy. Is it thus you welcome the liberty you have so ardently solicited?"

"How (returned Rosina) can I estimate a blessing that is to be purchased at the expence of your peace! relying on your honourable protection, I had reconciled my mind to my captivity. Destined as I am to calamity, and verging to the grave, it matters little to me where I waste the short remainder of my existence; here then let me still continue to reside in voluntary obscurity, no longer your prisoner, but your guest."

"These flights are too high, Rosina; I am determined not to be your murderer; were you to expire beneath my roof, horrors, worse than infernal, would haunt and persecute me. Oh why did we ever meet! or rather why must we part! but come, prepare yourself; Holyhead is not more than five and forty miles distant; we shall reach it easily to day, though we travel slowly, for you are not equal to any great fatigue."

Rosina parted not from the scene of her captivity without many tears; even her separation from her old attendant was accompanied by some regrets

gret, and she bestowed on her a ring of value, which she happened to have about her when she was carried away.

Tudor rode, he did not address her until they stopped to bait, and then he spoke but little, and on general subjects. In the evening when they arrived at Holyhead, they were informed that a packet would be ready to sail in an hour. Tudor asked Rosina whether it was her desire to sail that night? she replied, that she would be entirely influenced by his wishes.

“As the wind is fair, (replied he, with an air of affected calmness) it would be imprudent to lose your passage, unless you fear the fatigue, and wish to repose yourself after your journey.”

“Repose myself, (repeated Rosina) bursting into tears) O how insulting is this coldness! Is repose for a troubled and agitated breast like mine? Strong as are the ties which draw me to Ireland, a bond still more powerful seems to detain me. Shall you be more generous than I am grateful! Tudor, my opposition to your wishes is at an end; accept my hand, and ——”

“What, without your heart! the emulative offering of a spirit that scorns to be excelled in generosity! you love me not, Rosina.”

“But hereafter,” said Rosina.

“No, no, (interrupted Tudor) I cannot stake my happiness on a chance so dubious as that *hereafter*. I cannot avail myself of an offer which is the offspring of a momentary effervescence, not the result of attachment. The vows you pronounced would be succeeded by repentance on your side, and by distrust on mine. If I risk the loss of fortune by my share in this adventure, why should you endure the punishment of my deviation? I voluntarily engaged in a scheme of fraud and violence, and my reason cannot but acknowledge the justice of the retribution, even whilst I smart beneath it. My hopes may be disappointed, my fortune may suffer, but ——”

“On my account (interrupted Rosina) it shall not; for here I pledge you a solemn promise, that no circumstance whatever shall extort from my lips a confession of the part you have acted in this unhappy transaction.”

“When

"When it is known (returned Tudor) that you were carried away at the instigation of the Earl of L——, and detained by his influence, your suppression of my name will avail but little; that circumstance will naturally appear in the course of the evidence. His Lordship will not require to be informed from whom you received your liberty; and I confess the reproaches which I have incurred by my falsehood to his reposed trust, give me some uneasiness. However, I may stand acquitted to my own feelings."

"I meant not (said Rosina) to promise you a partial concealment. No sentence that can develop this unfortunate affair, shall ever pass my lips, 'till you yourself release me from this solemn engagement. Your secret shall rest as secure in my bosom, as if it were still to be confined to the melancholy captivity from which I have been rescued by your benevolence."

"Rosina, (said Tudor, with astonishment) are you conscious of the consequences which such concealment would involve! would not such silence be interpreted to your disadvantage—what means have you to clear your reputation, but a tacit avowal of the truth? would not your absence, attended by so

many suspicious circumstances, be attributed to causes the most criminal, were you to refuse to the enquiries of your friends this reasonable satisfaction?"

"Considerations such as these, (replied Rosina) might once have been powerful, but they have now lost their weight. Shall the sacred dictates of gratitude and honour, be sacrificed to the groundless censures of a world, from which I believe myself on the point of departing! no, let malevolence still enjoy its triumph—one faithful bosom, in spite of the mystery that involves my fate, will credit my simple assertion of my innocence—will receive me with rapture, and sooth me with tender consolation."

"Exalted creature! (cried Tudor) this resolution, inadequate as I still must believe your fortitude to the performance of the task your generosity imposes on itself, excites my astonishment, for the nobleness of such a project evidences the enlargement of your mind. But you know not the difficulty of such a task."

"Difficult I allow it to be, (said Rosina) but not I hope impracticable. Ah, (continued she, tenderly

tenderly taking his hand) can I require a motive to invigorate my perseverance, when the fame and fortune of my friend and benefactor, depend upon my secrecy. Return then to the Earl of L—, tell him I am ill—suffer him to believe I am still in confinement, and rely upon my gratitude.”

“ I can, I do, (cried Tudor) for weak as such reliance may appear, your words possess some strange mysterious charm; some inconceivable power of conviction, and it seems impiety to disbelieve them. Allow me this last embrace. Rosina, the consciousness of my own unworthiness to possess you, reconciles me to this separation. And now I go to recommend you to the care of the captain; for the sooner these painful conflicts are over, the sooner shall we both regain our tranquillity.”

He left her, and an hour afterwards Rosina sailed for Ireland.

Having embarked her on the waves, we will trust her to their mercy, and look back to the events which occurred subsequent to young Fitzosborne's return to Ireland, at the period when he

and his two companions were driven abruptly homewards by the manœuvres of the little Crookback, concurring with the whimsical obstinacy of old Nettleby.

C H A P. IX.

FRUITLESS ENQUIRIES.

WHEN Fitzosborne had related the occurrences of his journey to his mother, though somewhat inclined to censure his warmth, and the easiness with which he had been induced to condemn Rosina, she was fully conscious of the danger that awaited his longer stay in Wales, and rejoiced that the

the ridiculous terrors of Nettleby had conspired with the remonstrances of Hume, to precipitate his departure. Strong as were the appearances of Rosina's culpability to Mrs. Fitzosborne, who with all the fervor of friendship, possessed all its amiable reliance, they were far from being convincing: or rather she felt it impossible to believe that a mind so pure and honourable as that of her beloved young pupil, could have so suddenly apostatized from those principles of virtue which had been instilled into it from infancy, with unceasing solicitude.

But friendship in the bosom of Mrs. Fitzosborne was too active a principal, to waste its energy in vague conjecture. Though her state of health was ill adapted to such an enterprize, she determined to sail in the next packet, fly to Rosina's retirement, and tear her from the presence of a betrayer, who, it was too evident, meditated a seduction which she could not believe he had accomplished. When she communicated this design to her son, she positively rejected his attendance on her journey, and with much difficulty convinced his reason, that his presence might prevent the success of her project, but could not possibly facilitate it. She represented the fatal consequences which might ensue from

his encountering Lord Raymond, and his filial tenderness yielded to her solicitude for his preservation.

Lady Bell Beauchamp offered to accompany Mrs. Fitzosborne in this expedition. Few preparations were necessary for such a journey; both ladies were ready in twenty-four hours: but it seemed that the winds had conspired with the machinations of the little Crookback, to effect the destruction of Rosina's peace. Mrs. Fitzosborne and Lady Bell were obliged to wait four tedious days in Dublin, before the obstinate contrariety of the winds permitted a packet to leave the harbour; and in that unfortunate interval, the plan of carrying off Rosina had been executed.

The ladies were twenty hours at sea. On reaching Holyhead, they immediately went forwards without waiting to repose themselves; the first night they slept at Bangor-Ferry; they arose early in the morning to pursue their journey, and whilst they waited in a parlour until their carriage was ready, to Mrs. Fitzosborne's inexpressible astonishment, old Austin rushed into the room, and flung himself at her feet.

This

This poor old man, on the night Rosina had been carried away, had instantly alarmed the neighbourhood, and detached parties in pursuit of her; but finding all his exertions utterly fruitless, and that it was impossible even to arrive at the knowledge of the road she had travelled; in the anguish of his soul he had formed the resolution of immediately journeying to Ireland, and disclosing to Mrs. Fitzosborne and her son, all the circumstances of this mysterious affair with which he was acquainted, not doubting that they would use some effectual efforts for the recovery of Rosina. His faithful ass, Dicky, had been the companion of this pilgrimage: he had reached the ferry early the preceding evening; and as he had been in bed before the arrival of Mrs. Fitzosborne, who came late to the inn, he had remained ignorant of this fortunate circumstance until morning, when going into the stable to feed his ass, the first person he met, was his old fellow servant Robert, who had attended Mrs. Fitzosborne from Ireland, and who, after the first gratulations, occasioned by this unexpected interview were over, conducted him to the presence of his lady.

Mrs. Fitzosborne, though at first transported at the appearance of Austin, whom she vainly ima-

gined to be the herald of Rosina's approach, soon drew a fatal presage from the sobs and tears with which he passionately embraced her knees, and deprecated her resentment. With difficulty, and by degrees, she drew from him the melancholy intelligence he came to disclose: and it is unnecessary to tell, with what sensation she listened to it; her hopes all frustrated, her tenderness disappointed, her Rosina lost. Her suspicions instantly fastened themselves on Lord Raymond, as the perpetrator of this base and brutal action. The anguish and perturbation of her mind, far from debilitating her resolution, added strength to her exertions; she determined to go forwards without loss of time, and if possible, collect some circumstances which might throw a light on Rosina's destiny. The necessary delays of travelling were rendered irksome by the impatience of her own spirit; each moment she called out to the postillions to drive faster. As Dicky was by no means equal to the celerity with which this journey was performed, he had been left at Bangor, and Austen had followed Mrs. Fitzosborne in another chaise, accompanied by her woman, who had also been his old companion, and had waited on Rosina in her childhood.

Next

Next day they arrived at the cottage, which Austin had committed to the care of Rosina's Welsh servant. As Mrs. Fitzosborne entered this deserted and melancholy habitation, which had been for near a year the asylum of her beloved young favorite, the sad tranquillity which pervaded every object, seemed to freeze her blood with a death-like horror. Wherever she turned her eyes, she perceived affecting vestiges of Rosina; her work, her books, her drawings and music, which lay scattered about the parlour; her harp, which leaned against a table; once Lady Bell, who walked mournfully about the room, approached it, and inadvertently touched the strings; a passing bell could not have struck so forcibly on Mrs. Fitzosborne's feelings.

“ Had she died, (cried she, starting suddenly from the stupefaction of melancholy, to all the poignancy of awakened sensibility) I could have followed her to the grave with triumph—I should have yielded to heaven the child it committed to my care, in all the dignity of unblemished honour! O Mortimer! O Emely! friends ever dear and lamented, how have I fulfilled your delegated trust! your Rosina is innocent, and I only am to blame! I who compelled her by my obstinacy to this rash

and fatal elopement. Oh, Lady Bell, had I consented to her entreaties, and committed her to your care ! here torrents of tears interrupted her accents.

Lady Bell, though herself deeply afflicted, used every argument to console Mrs. Fitzosborne, that could be adopted in a situation so barren of consolation.

CHAP. X.

A JOURNEY TO LONDON.

AMONGST other particulars relative to Rosina, Mrs. Fitzosborne had learned from Austin, that she had been sometimes visited by Mrs. Evelyn, and had always expressed great gratitude and esteem for that lady ; she was also informed that she was aunt to Lord Raymond ; and these circumstances determined her to apply to her benevolence

volence for information and counsel in her present distressing perplexity. She dispatched Austin with a billet, entreating permission to wait on her; and Mrs. Evelyn, whom Rosina's communications had rendered perfectly acquainted with Mrs. Fitzosborne's character, returned a polite answer, signifying that she would have the pleasure of attending her immediately. She arrived at the cottage an hour afterwards, already prepared by Rosina's confidence, to admire and esteem Mrs. Fitzosborne, and the elegance of her appearance, and the sweetness of her manners, considerably heightened the favourable impression.

Mrs. Fitzosborne, whose heart was too deeply wounded to allow an attention to the etiquette which custom has established on similar occasions, with a dignified ingenuousness, unfolded the purpose for which she had solicited this interview, appealed with energy to Mrs. Evelyn's justice and humanity, and besought her assistance to recover Rosina from the hands of Lord Raymond.

Mrs. Evelyn heard this address with astonishment. She had at first suspected Lord Raymond of having carried off Rosina, and in the warmth of indignation kindled by such a surmise, had bitterly reproached

reproached him with the imagined crime; but his solemn asseverations of his innocence, co-operating with the circumstances of his situation, which rendered it highly improbable that he could have carried so violent a measure into execution in so short a time, and with so profound a secrecy, remote as he was from every person who could have assisted him in such an undertaking, had at length convinced her that she injured him by the supposition, and induced her to acquiesce in the probable conjecture, that Rosina had been carried off by the Fitzosborne's; a persuasion which had satisfied her doubts, and banished her uneasiness on her account.

In this information, however, which she now received from Mrs. Evelyn, Mrs. Fitzosborne perceived nothing but the artifice of Lord Raymond, whom she imagined had forborne to take an active part in this enterprize, the better to conceal his infamous machinations, and impose on the credulity of his aunt: and his departure from Wales the day but one after Rosina had been carried off, appeared to her a strongly corroborating testimony of his guilt. Even Mrs. Evelyn now began to waver in her opinion, for she was conscious that the protestations of a man of Lord Raymond's consummate duplicity, merited little reliance.

Mrs.

Mrs. Fitzosborne, ever prompt in her resolutions, and active in her operations, determined to set off next day for London, have an interview with Lord Raymond, and demand the restoration of Rosina. Mrs. Evelyn, meantime, persuaded Mrs. Fitzosborne and Lady Bell, to pass the night at her house, where, as Sir Gregory and his female companions had sometime since taken their leave, there was no one to restrain their conversation, which turned entirely on the distressing subject that occupied their thoughts.

Pursuant to the determination of the preceding evening, Mrs. Fitzosborne and Lady Bell set out next morning for London; Mrs. Fitzosborne having previously given Austin directions to offer a large sum of money to any person who should discover the place of Rosina's confinement, and to remain himself at the cottage until he should receive her further orders.

They arrived in London without any accident, and after providing lodgings, Mrs. Fitzosborne's first care was to inform herself secretly whether Lord Raymond was in town. On receiving information that he had been near a week in London, her heart beat tumultuously, for she imagined
6 that

that he had conveyed Rosina to town with him; and the idea that she might be detained a prisoner even in the next street to her, filled her with an anxiety and impatience almost intolerable. She was apprehensive, that if she sent a message to Lord Raymond in her own name, the consciousness of his guilt might induce him to avoid an interview, which must cover him with confusion; it was therefore determined that Lady Bell should write her compliments to his Lordship, requesting to see him at their lodgings in Pall-Mall.

Lord Raymond, though somewhat surprised at this summons, from a lady with whom he was utterly unacquainted, had too much gallantry to decline it; he came at the appointed time; but it will be easily believed he was not greatly delighted at finding his old acquaintance, Mrs. Fitzosborne, with Lady Bell. However, he acquitted himself in this disagreeable circumstance, with his usual presence of mind.

Mrs. Fitzosborne exerted her utmost self-command, to repress the indignation which glowed in her bosom at the sight of Lord Raymond, whom she calmly and explicitly acquainted with the motives which had induced her to require this interview,

view, and with great moderation entreated him to restore Rosina. Lord Raymond had no need to counterfeit astonishment at this unexpected requisition; it was, however, in vain that he protested his innocence; Mrs. Fitzosborne came pre-possessed with a conviction of his hypocrisy, and a predetermination to disbelieve his disavowal of the imputed guilt. He had never before felt himself in a situation so truly disagreeable and embarrassing; for notwithstanding his innocence of the alledged crime, he was conscious that the criminality of his views, and the base duplicity of his conduct in respect to Rosina, had furnished Mrs. Fitzosborne with grounds of suspicion, apparently the most convincing.

The conversation was long, and on all sides most highly distressing. Mrs. Fitzosborne sometimes expostulated with his reason; sometimes endeavoured to awaken his conscience, by representing the turpitude of the crime of which she supposed him to be guilty, and sometimes appealing to his humanity, besought him with tears to restore her, her dear Rosina.

Lord Raymond, who was really shocked and astonished to find that Rosina had not been carried

ried away by the Fitzosbornes, as he supposed she had, said every thing his imagination could suggest in vindication of his innocence; and Mrs. Fitzosborne's belief began at length to yield to the solemnity of his asseverations, and the awful imprecations with which he invoked the Almighty to pour curses on his head if he deceived her. She could no longer suppose him guilty of a dissimulation so atrocious, an impiety so hardened, as thus voluntarily to brave the vengeance of an offended divinity; and Lord Raymond extorted from her, before they separated, a confession of her belief, that she had injured him by her suspicions.

But on whom could she now turn those suspicions which Lord Raymond's protestations had averted from himself! his Lordship, indeed, had obliquely insinuated a supposition, that young Fitzosborne, whom he believed to be passionately in love with Rosina, might himself have carried her off without his mother's knowledge; but the idea had been treated by Mrs. Fitzosborne and Lady Bell with so much contempt and indignation, that though Lord Raymond still fostered it in his own depraved imagination, his politeness prevented him from insisting on it farther.

CHAP. XI.

THEY RETURN TO IRELAND.

THUS fluctuating in the most wretched uncertainty, and no longer knowing where to direct her suspicions, Mrs. Fitzosborne continued some days in London, 'till convinced, at last, that her remaining there was useless, and apprehensive lest her son should sacrifice the promise she had extorted from him to his impatience at her long protracted absence, she yielded to Lady Bell's entreaties, who was justly apprehensive of the effects which such great fatigue, and such continual agitation might produce on her constitution, already impaired and delicate, and with a melancholy and desponding spirit, set out on her return to Ireland.

Hector

Hector Fitzosborne, meantime, had expected her with an impatience, which no motive but his regard for the sacred promise she had exacted from him, could control. She arrived at length, but Rosina was not her companion; and this circumstance was sufficiently expressive of the ill success of her enterprise.

“ You have succeeded no better than myself, (said he, when he saw she had returned without Rosina) you are now convinced I did not deceive you; Rosina refused to accompany you—she has formed other ties! ties dearer than those of honour, gratitude or friendship!”

He looked earnestly at his mother, expecting her answer, but she replied not. Fearful of exasperating and driving him to some desperate determination, she had resolved, with Lady Bell's advice, to suppress the circumstances of Rosina's melancholy adventure, to suffer him to remain in his error, and still believe that her absence was prompted by inclination, rather than by an eclairsissement, which would have vindicated her innocence, expose him to the danger of a rencounter with Lord Raymond, which she was well assured would be the inevitable consequence of such vindication.

“ Rosina,

“ Rosina, (said Lady Bell) had left the cottage before we arrived at it, and no one could inform us whither she was gone. We waited some time in hopes of discovering the place of her concealment, but ——”

“ And to what purpose, madam, (interrupted Fitzosborne, haughtily) would have been the discovery? we have no authority to force Miss Mortimer from the person whom she has chosen for her protector. Since she prefers his guardianship to our’s, let her enjoy it henceforward, without molestation or interruption. The duties of friendship have been amply fulfilled; we have now only to forget a person who has rendered herself unworthy our remembrance.”

Dissembling the pang that rankled in his bosom, he smiled disdainfully as he spoke, and with a noble resolution, determined from that moment to banish from his breast the idea, and from his lips the name of Rosina.

His mother, though deeply hurt at the necessity which obliged her to suffer him to remain in an error so injurious to Rosina, was yet rejoiced at a silence which spared her the trouble of endeavouring

Hector Fitzosborne, meantime, had expected her with an impatience, which no motive but his regard for the sacred promise she had exacted from him, could control. She arrived at length, but Rosina was not her companion; and this circumstance was sufficiently expressive of the ill success of her enterprise.

“ You have succeeded no better than myself, (said he, when he saw she had returned without Rosina) you are now convinced I did not deceive you; Rosina refused to accompany you — she has formed other ties! ties dearer than those of honour, gratitude or friendship!”

He looked earnestly at his mother, expecting her answer, but she replied not. Fearful of exasperating and driving him to some desperate determination, she had resolved, with Lady Bell's advice, to suppress the circumstances of Rosina's melancholy adventure, to suffer him to remain in his error, and still believe that her absence was prompted by inclination, rather than by an eclaireissement, which would have vindicated her innocence, expose him to the danger of a rencounter with Lord Raymond, which she was well assured would be the inevitable consequence of such vindication.

“ Rosina,

“ Rosina, (said Lady Bell) had left the cottage before we arrived at it, and no one could inform us whither she was gone. We waited some time in hopes of discovering the place of her concealment, but ——”

“ And to what purpose, madam, (interrupted Fitzosborne, haughtily) would have been the discovery? we have no authority to force Miss Mortimer from the person whom she has chosen for her protector. Since she prefers his guardianship to our’s, let her enjoy it henceforward, without molestation or interruption. The duties of friendship have been amply fulfilled; we have now only to forget a person who has rendered herself unworthy our remembrance.”

Dissembling the pang that rankled in his bosom, he smiled disdainfully as he spoke, and with a noble resolution, determined from that moment to banish from his breast the idea, and from his lips the name of Rosina.

His mother, though deeply hurt at the necessity which obliged her to suffer him to remain in an error so injurious to Rosina, was yet rejoiced at a silence which spared her the trouble of endeavouring

ing to evade the enquiries which she dreaded he would have made ; and had they been judged by their conversation, it would have been imagined, that the idea of Rosina had been suddenly expunged by some strange oblivion, from the remembrance of both.

But it is easier to stifle the emotions of inquietude, than to obliterate the sense of misfortune ; young Fitzosborne found it easier to fling from his breast the little portrait of Rosina, which had been so many years the favourite of his bosom, the companion of his travels, the flatterer of his hopes, and the soother of his anxieties, than to erase from his heart that stronger and more lovely impression, which had been engraven by time, and fostered by fond remembrance. In a laudable spirit of manly resolution, he determined to conquer a weakness he despised ; but in the dissolution of the fairy dreams, which so long had captivated his imagination, his heart experienced a cruel void ; still, however, resolved to acquire a victory over his rebellious feelings, he hoped to fill this dreary vacuity with amusement, and steep in the intoxication of pleasure, the corroding repinings of concealed distress.

His

His mother was surpris'd at this sudden revolution; he who before had sedulously declined all parties of pleasure, was now most eager to promote them. His days, and often his nights, were devoted to these new pursuits; and the perpetual hurry in which he lived, might possibly have accomplished it's destined purpose, had not the interference of subsequent events, recalled with new force to his bosom, the ideas and impressions it was so strongly his wish to obliterate.

C H A P. XII.

AN OLD KNAVE MAKES A VIRTUE OF
NECESSITY.

MELANCHOLY and affecting remembrances had rendered her once favourite residence at Belle-vue, hateful to Mrs. Fitzosborne. Her physicians had prescribed sea bathing, and she had taken a lodge near Bray, where she usually passed her time, whilst Mr. Fitzosborne the elder, spent his in entertaining his favourite companions

panions at Belle-vue, and Hector was wholly occupied with those new amusements which he seemed to pursue with increasing avidity, and to which he allotted every portion of his time which was not devoted to his mother. And as these amusements were neither vicious nor vulgar, Mrs. Fitzosborne, whose sensibility pointed out to her the secret motive which led him to embrace a course of dissipation, so foreign to his natural inclination, rejoiced in his exertions, and secretly applauded the elevation of mind which prompted him to contend with, and to conquer an ill-placed attachment, as he conceived his to be.

Whilst she thus passed her solitary hours, preyed on by latent unhappiness and anxious solicitude, in respect to the fate of Rosina, an incident occurred, which though it would have formerly been the most flattering to her wishes, now contributed to revive her regrets, and render them irresistibly painful.

Faithful to the promise she had made Rosina, previous to her elopement, that event had not prevented her from carrying on the proceedings necessary for the recovery of the long disputed fortune of the Mortimer's, with all the vigour the circumstances of the suit demanded. But when her exertions

tions seemed most likely to be crowned with success, they were rendered unnecessary by an event of which she had never formed the slightest expectation.

The defendant, who was brother to Rosina's grandfather, and who for near sixty years had held possession of her fortune, and supported his fraudulent claims by a course of the most iniquitous litigation, now, in his extreme old age, either foreseeing that the prey he had so long contrived to detain in his possession, would be wrested from his heirs by the laws which he could no longer baffle; or terrified at the idea of plunging into an awful eternity, with all the guilt of his unnatural usurpation on his head; and fancying, perhaps, like Mr. Nettleby, that he could bribe the divine justice, and avert its vengeance, by a restitution of the spoils of his rapacity, when he was no longer in a capacity to withhold them; which ever of these motives operated on his conduct, he made a will, and bequeathed to Rosina the estate which had been so long the subject of contention, besides other property, to the amount of ten thousand pounds. He survived this act of long deferred justice, but a few weeks; and this intelligence, which Mrs. Fitzosborne learned in her retreat, served only to revive her sorrow for Rosina's absence.

C H A P. XIII.ROSINA'S RETURN.

Sweet the delight when the gall'd heart
Feels consolation's lenient hand
Bind up the wound from fortune's dart
With friendship's life-supporting band!

HAYLEY.

IT is now time to return to Rosina, and conduct her safe to Ireland.—Overcome with fatigue, exhausted with disquietude, and affected with violent sickness, she felt the powers of life so languid and debilitated, that she doubted whether her remaining strength would enable her to conclude her journey, and allow the sad satisfaction of expiring in the arms of her friend. The evening after she left Holyhead she arrived in Dublin. She was put more than half dead into a carriage that was prepared

pared for her, and gave the driver directions to take her to Mr. Fitzosborne's town-residence in Rutland-Square; for, though she thought it probable that Mrs. Fitzosborne might at that season be at Belle-vue, she knew the servants would joyfully receive her, and acquaint their lady with her arrival. Her bodily sufferings had abated the keenness of her mental sensations; and the strongest feeling she now experienced, was wonder at her own insensibility. Such was her frame of mind when the carriage stopped. A servant came to enquire her commands. "Robert!" said Rosina, suddenly recollecting him. The man, astonished and overjoyed at her appearance, flew into the house, to proclaim her arrival to Mrs. Fitzosborne and her son, who had been detained some days in town on accidental business. All the family were instantly collected in the hall. Hector Fitzosborne carried Rosina into the house in his arms, and conveyed her to those of his mother, who received her with passionate and half-frantic transports of joy.

"My prayers are heard! (cried she.) My Rosina, the child of my love, is restored to me! Merciful Heaven! I thank thee. What unexpected felicity! O, speak, my beloved; let me once more hear your voice! Where have you

been? Who has detained you? Why, O, why have you been thus long absent from us?"

Rosina, who felt as if the scene around her was some visionary representation of a disturbed imagination, tenderly returned the embraces of her benefactress, but could only answer her by her sighs.

The lights which the servants now brought discovered to Fitzosborne, who continued to assist his mother in supporting Rosina, the change which had taken place in her appearance.

"Gracious God! (he exclaimed,) is this pale, emaciated spectre the Rosina I so lately saw, florid with health, and animate with vivacity! O, villain! villain! why was I weakly persuaded to restrain the vengeance which might have averted the evil that can now only be revenged!"

Rosina, terrified at his violence, raised her languid eyes to him. She would have spoken, but the words died on her trembling lips. She sunk into those repeated swoonings, to which the increasing weakness of her constitution rendered her every day more subject. A physician was sent for:

for: he prescribed some cordials, but insisted chiefly on her being kept quiet.

Her fits continued several hours with little intermission. She once opened her eyes; and raising them to Mrs. Fitzosborne with more spirit than she had hitherto shewn, "The misjudging world may condemn me, (said she,) but the faith of friendship is implicit. I am innocent."

"It is enough, Rosina, (said Mrs. Fitzosborne, embracing her with fervor;) that single assurance suffices as amply for your justification as ten thousand protestations. O, Hector, why this cold severity of aspect? Why do you not sympathize in my joy, and congratulate me on this blessed restoration!"

Fitzosborne turned from his mother without replying. He had viewed Rosina with mixed sensations of pity, horror, regret, and indignation; and the gloomy passions which actuated his bosom were painted by turns on his countenance.

In consequence of an anodyne draught, Rosina sunk into a slumber. The next day she was in a

high fever, and the physician desired she might on no account be disturbed, or suffered to speak.

This prescription, however painful to Mrs. Fitzosborne's curiosity, was strictly complied with. The motives which had hitherto induced her to deceive her son, now ceased to operate. Eager to vindicate Rosina from the injurious impressions which her refusal to accompany him to Ireland, and his belief of her subsequent voluntary flight from the cottage, had conspired to fix upon his mind, she revealed to his knowledge all the circumstances which her dread of his seeking an explanation from Lord Raymond, had hitherto induced her to conceal. She informed him of the message Rosina had sent him by Austin, and her positive determination to accompany him to Ireland, on that unlucky morning when he had been hurried away by Nettleby's ridiculous apprehensions. She enlarged on the confidence she had placed in Mrs. Evelyn, and that lady's tender esteem for her, and the strong testimony she bore to the rectitude of her conduct; and she expatiated on the contempt and indignation with which she had driven Lord Raymond from her presence, when the baseness of his views became known to her;

and

and the firmness with which she had rejected his advances towards a reconciliation.

Fitzosborne listened to the relation of this detail with various emotions. He felt that he had injured Rosina by the suspicions which so many concurring circumstances had impressed upon his mind. He blamed and lamented the warmth of his own feelings and temper, which had hurried him away with unnecessary precipitation, when a more cool and dispassionate conduct, a more calm and deliberate explanation with Rosina, might have afforded him the conviction of her errors, and spared to her those scenes of danger and distress she must have encountered in her unhappy adventure, to his mother the afflicting hours she had passed since that unfortunate period, and to himself the disappointment of his dearest hopes.

But Rosina was again at liberty, and apparently released from any engagement with Lord Raymond, raised by a sudden revolution of fortune to an equality with himself, he no longer apprehended from his father any opposition to his wishes, should they now lead to an union, which in other circumstances he would have so violently protested against. Rosina, it is true, had not escaped the

envenomed tongue of slander; but the aspersions had been partial. The reports raised to her disadvantage had not circulated beyond the sphere of the obscure and distant region where they had first been propagated. Mr. Hume was the only person who was likely to give them any currency, and he had bound himself by a solemn promise to Mrs. Fitzosborne and her son, not to reveal any circumstance of that journey, as it was their desire that Mr. Fitzosborne the elder should be kept in ignorance respecting the motives of it. But still the consciousness that Lord Raymond had been beloved by Rosina, the belief that she had been carried off by him only, and detained for upwards of two months absolutely in his power; for he treated as weak and chimerical his mother's confidence in the vows and protestations of such a villain as he conceived Lord Raymond to be,—the events which might have occurred in that fatal interval haunted his imagination, embittered his reflections, and crushed those hopes of felicity which other circumstances seemed calculated to inspire. The calm he had been beginning to enjoy was exchanged for tumult and confusion; resentment pointed out Lord Raymond as the author of his sufferings, and revenge seemed to promise an alleviation of the misfortunes which had originated
in

in his baseness. But these gloomy and sanguinary schemes of vengeance passed like transitory shadows over the mind of Fitzosborne, which was no less accessible to conviction than alive to humanity. The idea of his mother's tears was sufficient to extinguish his resentment, when it burned the fiercest. He however formed one resolution, and promised himself to adhere to it with determined inflexibility. If the mystery which at present involved the fate and actions of Rosina should not be cleared in a manner the most satisfactory; if, on the strictest investigation, her honour appeared not clear and unblemished, he resolved to vanquish each softer impulse of his heart, inflict on himself a voluntary exile, and seek in other climates that felicity which had eluded his pursuit in his own.

Rosina, meantime, gladly acquiesced in a silence which, when she reflected on her sacred promises to Tudor, she could have wished to have been allowed to preserve for ever.

CHAP. XIV.

DISTRUST AND JEALOUSY.

— — — Now jealous doubts controul
The gentler feelings of his tortured soul.

FOR two days Mrs. Fitzosborne watched her patient in silent solicitude, and repressed the enquiries which the restlessness of her anxiety would have perpetually dictated. She often expressed her disquietude to her son; but he rather avoided speaking of Rosina: and though his emotions betrayed his secret uneasiness, he seemed to struggle with his sensations, as if conscious they originated in a weakness unworthy of him.

Lady

Lady Bell Beauchamp, as soon as informed of Rosina's return, flew to congratulate her friends on this happy event, and consented to remain some time with Mrs. Fitzosborne.

On the third day Rosina's fever, which had chiefly originated in fatigue and vexation, had almost entirely left her. She was conscious that the curiosity of her friends must be strongly excited; and her inability to give them the necessary satisfaction depressed her spirits with continual disquietude. She knew that she must come to some kind of an explanation; and she felt that the longer it was deferred, the more painful and arduous it appeared. It hung like a weight upon her heart; and, determined to throw it off by one effort of resolution, she arose, dressed herself, and went into Mrs. Fitzosborne's dressing-room, which was adjoining to her own apartment. She found Lady Bell and young Fitzosborne with her friend. They were surprised at her appearance, and reproved her imprudence in quitting her chamber.

"The anxiety of my mind (said she, as they seated her on a sofa) permitted me not to rest there. I hope I shall be better here. I have wished to speak to you. My silence must have surprised

F 6

you :

you : but what I am going to say will not lessen your astonishment. I know not where to begin. I find myself reduced to an alternative the most distressing.

They all sat with their eyes fixed on her. Fitzosborne's bosom heaved with the anxiety of his expectation.

"I am come (continued Rosina, when she could recover her voice) not to gratify your curiosity, but to entreat your indulgence. I acknowledge your rights to my confidence, your claims on my gratitude; those rights and those claims have never been absent from my heart. Yet now I find myself compelled by a cruel necessity to be unjust to the demands of your friendship, and condemned to preserve a secrecy which may subject me to a forfeiture of the dearest blessings this world can offer me. You know I was forcibly carried away from the cottage, and detained in confinement more than two months; and you will naturally expect me to clear that dark transaction to your satisfaction: but I cannot, I dare not; my lips are sealed; motives the most powerful oblige me to draw a veil over the occurrences of that unhappy interval."

Mrs.

Mrs. Fitzosborne and Lady Bell regarded each other in astonishment. Hector Fitzosborne started; his face grew pale with horror, and again flushed with indignation.

"Perhaps I am wrong, (said Rosina, reading their various emotions in their countenances,) perhaps the obligations I owe your friendship ought to absolve me from all other ties. Yet, should it ever be in my power to develop the mystery which now hovers around me, I am persuaded you will retract your opinion, and applaud the silence you are now inclined to censure. Friendship, exalted as yours, demands the purest sacrifices, not the guilty offerings of ingratitude and perjury."

"Perjury (said Fitzosborne) is the crime of the guilty wretch, who, for iniquitous purposes, profanes a solemn ceremony, and is pre-determined to violate the oath he takes: but extorted promises are no less invalidated by reason than by law; and a weak scrupulosity alone can believe them to be binding."

"No extorted promise passed my lips, (said Rosina.) To such obligations my reason, as well as your's, would renounce an adherence. The
promise

promise by which I feel myself bound was sacred and voluntary. The vows, which not the hopes of returning to life and liberty could force from my lips whilst in a hated confinement, were freely and willingly offered as a tribute to that worth and generosity which I had no other means of rewarding."

"Worth and generosity! (repeated Fitzosborne, whose fancy was still possessed with the idea that Lord Raymond only could have carried away Rosina.) Heaven, what a profanation of terms! Yet, surely it requires no great penetration to develop your mystery. Your worthy and generous liberator bound you by solemn promises to a concealment of his crimes, lest they should be overtaken by their merited vengeance; for cowardice is ever the concomitant of treachery."

"My worthy and generous liberator (returned Rosina) had no crimes to conceal: his clear and honourable bosom might bid defiance to the keenest inspection. But that liberator was not Lord Raymond."

"How! (cried Fitzosborne,) were you then rescued from him by another?"

"No,

"No, (said Rosina,) for, strange as you may think it, since I was forced from the cottage I have never seen him; nor had he the slightest share in that wicked transaction."

"Then he did not deceive us," said Mrs. Fitzosborne.

"This is astonishing, (said young Fitzosborne;) but who else ——."

"To that enquiry (interrupted Rosina) I must not reply. In scenes of the most imminent danger, commissioned angels seemed to watch around me: where I had room to expect contempt and cruelty, I found respect and tenderness; and the humanity of one noble and honourable bosom converted a dreary dungeon into a safe and hospitable asylum. This is all I can at present disclose; future events may leave me more at liberty. Dare I, meantime, entreat your friendship not to misconstrue my silence; dare I conjure it to believe that it proceeds from a motive which I may hereafter avow without blushing."

"Rosina, (said Mrs. Fitzosborne,) you know too well my fond reliance to doubt your supreme

ascendant over my heart; you know you can make me believe as you wish. I will hope that future events may justify this mysterious secrecy; yet, methinks it is hard to conceive any adequate motives to assign it to."

"It is hard, indeed," said Fitzosborne.

"I allow it, (said Rosina.) I am conscious that what I require of you puts your friendship to the severest test."

"To a test too severe, I doubt, (said young Fitzosborne.) Friendship, ingenuous and candid, delights not in mystery; neither does it require of its votaries a blind and bigotted credulity."

"Oh, how severe is this language, (said Rosina, dissolving in tears.) I see I am no longer regarded as a friend or a sister; my sincerity is suspected, my veracity is doubted: but it is not wonderful that the loss of your friendship should follow that of your esteem."

Fitzosborne turned from her.

"Will

"Will you at least, my ever gentle and indulgent friend, (continued Rosina, tenderly pressing Mrs. Fitzosborne's hands,) will you at least, spite of ambiguous appearances, credit your Rosina's assertions of her innocence, and believe that she draws no guilty veil of dissimulation over actions unfit to be disclosed?"

"Good Heaven! (cried Mrs. Fitzosborne,) could I yield my belief to the asseverations of Lord Raymond, the man I despised and hated, and shall I deny it to my Rosina's! Yes, though the pride of supercilious reason may deride my too-easy credulity, my heart is your's; impress on it what characters you please. I feel that you can never abuse this unlimited confidence; for if one virtue towers eminently above the rest in your bosom, it is your ingenuousness."

"I, too, my sweet Rosina, (said Lady Bell,) will embrace whatever creed you wish me to adopt. Come, come, (continued she, taking Fitzosborne's hand, and drawing him gently towards Rosina,) are you to be the only infidel? Come, and recant your errors at the shrine of this dear injured saint, whom Heaven has at length granted to our prayers."

"Once,

“ Once, (said Fitzosborne, hastily disengaging his hand from Lady Bell,) I could have worshipped there, and with a devotion now fervent Heaven only knows ! But now ——.”

“ Well, well, (said Mrs. Fitzosborne, who best knew the character of her son,) though Hector may now appear obstinate in his heresy, we shall soon see him as true a believer as the best of us; but he will not yield to compulsion; so for the present let us leave him to his errors. Besides, I want to speak of other matters: I have joyful news for you, my Rosina.”

She judged this to be a proper season to impart to her the particulars of her grand-uncle's will. Rosina listened with astonishment, gratitude, and joy.

“ Thank Heaven ! (cried she,) let fate now do its worst, it will be in my power to recompense my noble benefactor.”

This inadvertent effusion vibrated to the heart of Fitzosborne: her hand and fortune, he imagined, were the recompence destined for this unknown favourite. He quitted the room abruptly.

Rosina's

Rosina's satisfaction was considerably allayed by the cold forbidding manners of Fitzosborne. She complained of them to his mother and Lady Bell, and entreated them to endeavour to obviate the disadvantageous impressions which her refusal to accompany him to Ireland had first created, and which the obstinacy of her silence, in respect to her subsequent adventures, seemed to fix upon his mind.

CHAP. XV.

THE INSUFFICIENCY OF FORTUNE TO PROCURE FELICITY.

But secret sorrow and corroding fears

Dimm'd the bright ray, and quench'd her joy in tears.

ROSINA, on finding herself thus unexpectedly mistress of a large and independent fortune, began to think of repaying to Tudor the debt of gratitude she owed him, and fancied that she should in time be able to vanquish the repugnance she still

still felt to the idea of an union with him. But she was not sufficiently certain of her own resolution to risk an explanation of her intentions: and in the present precarious situation of her health, she thought it would be inhuman to give birth to a hope which her death might ere long so cruelly and fatally disappoint. She however wrote to Tudor, acquainting him with her safe arrival and change of fortune; and received a concise answer, in which he congratulated her on the happy termination of her difficulties, and informed her that the Earl still continued in utter ignorance of her enlargement.

Rosina wrote also to Mrs. Evelyn, acquainting her with her return to her friends; but at the same time strictly enjoining her to keep this event a secret, even from her own family: an injunction which Mrs. Evelyn, though ignorant of the motive that produced it, most faithfully complied with.

Austin was immediately recalled to Ireland, without being made acquainted with the reason of such a summons; and his first interview with Rosina was to the last degree affecting and affectionate.

That

That which took place between her and Mr. Fitzosborne the elder was of a nature very different. Every report to her disadvantage had been so carefully concealed from him during her absence, that he imagined she was now come from the retreat to which he was fully conscious she had been driven by his own ill treatment, to take possession of the fortune that had been lately bequeathed her. Though he would still have greatly preferred for his son, a connection with any other woman of equal fortune, yet, as he now supposed his union with Rosina to be inevitable, he determined to consent to it with the best grace he could assume, and treated her with over-acted politeness, which she returned with a cold and constrained civility.

Mrs. Fitzosborne took Rosina to her lodge near Bray; and, as this retirement was little suited to Mr. Fitzosborne's taste, they had few interruptions from his society.

Since Rosina's return to Ireland, her first wish had been to regain the esteem and conciliate the friendship of young Fitzosborne; and, spite of the resolutions he had formed, and the mystery she still refused to develop, he felt that she gained more ground in his affections than she had ever lost in them.

them. He sometimes quitted her with a determination to try the effect of absence; but an impulse which he found it impossible to contend with, recalled him to her presence; and the unaffected pleasure with which she received him possessed a charm too flattering to be withstood. The impaired and feeble state of her constitution was calculated to call forth the tenderness he wished to conceal and stifle. Whenever she was particularly ill, he treated her with a fond assiduity, which often, on her becoming better, gave place to coldness and reserve. Rosina felt her happiness interested in these alterations. Notwithstanding this seeming caprice, she every moment experienced new admiration of a character, which united all the seductive softness of Lord Raymond, with Tudor's manly nobleness of spirit. She looked back with regret to the happiness of which her unadvised and precipitate flight from Ireland had probably deprived her. The remembrance of Lord Raymond's baseness became more hateful than ever; and every interview with Fitzosborne increased her repugnance to an union with Tudor. She saw that she was passionately beloved by the man who was, in her estimation, superior to every human being, except his mother; but she also saw that his tenderness was restrained and combatted
by

by a suspicion which her pride resented as injurious, and to which she was, on her part, no less obstinately determined never to sacrifice the vow of secrecy she had made to Tudor; and she sometimes flattered herself, that her increasing influence over the mind of Fitzosborne would render such a sacrifice unnecessary; and hoped that ere long his confidence in her rectitude would have become as implicit as that of his mother. But, though not doubtful of a return of the tenderness she felt rising in her bosom, she saw the event of it was extremely dubious; and in her gloomier hours she dreaded that a sudden retreat from Ireland would be the final result of the tumult she observed in Fitzosborne's thoughts; and she also perceived, that, though Mrs. Fitzosborne forbore, through delicacy, to express her anxieties on this subject, they were perfectly similar to her own. Thus, though restored to friendship and to liberty; though high in fortune and in favour, Rosina found herself at intervals but little less wretched than when a solitary captive in a dreary confinement, she had eagerly anticipated that final release which is the last resource of the miserable.

CHAP. XVI.

THE OLD LAWYER HARANGUES IN HIS USUAL
STYLE.

AFTER remaining three months in their retirement, they removed to town the latter end of November. Rosina's change of fortune produced its usual effect: those amongst her acquaintances who had been most ready to attribute her flight to improper motives, were now the first to felicitate her on her return to Ireland, and her accession to the inheritance of her ancestors. There were, however, some whose congratulations flowed from the pure source of genuine affection: of this number was her young friend, Miss Marsdon, who, though hurt at Rosina's want of confidence, had never ceased to lament her absence, and cherish her remem-

remembrance with tender regret. She and Lady Bell were the only visitors to whom Rosina in general appeared.

One day, whilst she enjoyed the society of those beloved friends, with that of Mrs. Fitzosborne and Hector, the door burst open, and Mr. Nettleby entered the room.

This abruptness had not allowed Rosina time to make her escape from an interview which she was conscious Mr. Nettleby's usual mode of referring to past events might render extremely disagreeable to her.

"Your porter denied me admittance, Mrs. Fitzosborne; (said he;) but I knew you were at home, and came in, in spite of his teeth. It's a terrible thing that people are obliged to have recourse to falsehood, to prevent their being eternally infested by a set of worthless wretches, who pass their useless existence in everlasting gadding and gossiping; and who, finding their time hang heavily on their own hands, contrive, as much as in them lies, to distribute the useless and disagreeable burthen amongst their acquaintances. I want to tell you how I have been tormented by that little

perverse vixen, Lady Flora, since I saw you. So, child, (perceiving Rosina,) I am glad to see you are well enough to come down stairs. Mercy on us, how you are altered! One would think you had been buried a month or two, and dug up again. What a skeleton! You are fit for nothing but the anatomy-house: and all by your own folly and perverseness. But thus it ever happens with such silly young wretches as won't suffer themselves to be governed by the aged and experienced, but run hand before head, without ever stopping a single moment to calculate chances, or consider contingencies. Now, in the name of common-sense, what put that silly freak of running off to Wales into your head?"

"Why, to tell you the truth, Mr. Nettleby, (said Miss Marsdon, perceiving her friend was a good deal disconcerted at the question,) poor Rosina, after maturely deliberating, and seriously ruminating on the casualties and contingencies of which your violent passion for her was likely to be productive, fearing lest it should prompt you to some act of desperation, thought it necessary to hide herself in some solitary region; and, with my advice, fled to Wales, to avoid the passionate importunity of your addresses."

"The passionate importunity of a fiddlestick, (exclaimed the old gentleman.) The child's a fool. So it was your fine advice that sent her packing on that silly adventure. A sage adviser, truly!"

"I am sorry it was not to America I sent her, (returned Miss Marsdon;) for a long sea-voyage would have been of notable service to you, and afforded you abundant leisure for your calculations; and without doubt the same inconceivable sympathy that directed you to Rosina's residence in Wales, would have led you to traverse distant oceans, and explore her retreat in remoter regions."

"I wish, (replied the old gentleman,) that some charitable christian, a friend to the repose of mankind, would lead you to explore a retreat in some remote mad-house? Could any one but a confirmed lunatic suppose that I followed the girl to Wales! What the devil was she to me, that I should waste my time, and expend my property, in the fruitless endeavour to reclaim her from her wanderings. It is true, I would have prevented the execution of her nonsensical exploit, if my proceedings had not been traversed by the cursed machinations of that damnable mantua-maker in

Grafton-street, and have given her excellent advice for the regulation of her conduct."

"Aye, (said Miss Marsdon,) because that costs you nothing."

"True, (returned Nettleby,) if it was any pecuniary disservice to me, I don't aver I should be altogether so liberal of it."

"That must be a very worthless commodity, then, (replied Miss Marsdon,) for which there is no purchaser to be found; so I beg you may never take it into your head to throw away any of it on me."

"It would be only casting pearls before swine, (retorted Nettleby,) as I have often done before. In giving wholesome advice and necessary counsel, the wise and experienced fulfil their duty: and if the swine turn and rend them, their sufferings are more meritorious. This reminds me of what I was going to tell you, Mrs. Fitzosborne, of that little insignificant toad, Lady Flora, that my wife nephew thought he had made such a capital stroke in marrying."

"Well,

"Well, Sir, and won't you allow that Mr. Hume made a very prudent match?"

"A very prudent match! Fine talk. Aye, so it may appear to short-sighted, shallow-brained people, that never take the trouble of looking into futurity, and balancing eventual losses and disappointments. You know Lady Flora was allowed by her father's will no more than five hundred a-year until she has compleated the term of her minority."

"I know it," said Mrs. Fitzosborne.

"And you know, also, (continued Nettleby,) that my scatter-brained devil of a nephew no sooner got himself married to this lady of quality, this rich heiress, than, forsooth, he must launch out into every species of fashionable foppery, and ridiculous extravagance. A fine house must be taken, a flaming equipage set up, all his apartments must be furnished with elegance, all his servants bedizened with gold lace! It was in vain I cried aloud against this folly and profusion, and advised him to put the little creature to board in some remote cheap part of the country, where he might have visited her once or twice a-year when he went his

circuit; which economic plan would have enabled him to save something handsome out of the stipend allowed her yearly, which might have been some consolation to him, in case of her demise before she was of age. But my salutary caution was derided as absurd; his estate was mortgaged to gratify her Ladyship's extravagant whimsies; and now guess how she is going to reward him for his blind indulgence."

"How?"

"Why she is going to die out of mere perverseness."

"I heard Lady Flora was ill, (returned Mrs. Fitzosborne,) but thought not the affair so serious."

"It is indeed a very serious affair to be bamboozled in such a manner by a little worthless reptile."

"But, dear Sir, (said Lady Bell,) how is Lady Flora to blame? It is to be presumed she would not die if she could help it."

"Yes,

"Yes, but she is to blame, and she could help it if she pleased. Her case is not so desperate as to preclude all hope of her recovery, if her obstinacy would allow her to use the necessary means. The physicians have ordered her to Bath; and though it is highly inconvenient to me to quit Dublin at the present juncture, on account of several consequential suits that are now depending, as I knew the waters would be beneficial to my own health, I offered to attend her thither myself; determined, however, to go by sea to Bristol, and trust myself to the mercy of the winds and waves, rather than risk another encounter with that little crookbacked devil, and his bloody gang of accomplices, who infest those horrible Welsh mountains, which I never think of without quaking."

"Well, and how did she relish the proposal?"

"O, she burst into tears, and said, that to go in my company would be the way to kill her at once; and that, if she must die, the least indulgence she could have, was to be suffered to leave the world in peace. Such was the fine return the ungrateful wretch made for all my kindness to her; for I protest to you, Mrs. Fitzosborne, that scarcely a day passed in which I did not spend two or three
G 4 hours

hours with her, because I knew company was good for her spirits; and if she had been my own issue, I could not have been more instant in advising and reproving her.—‘A fine thing it would be, truly, (she said,) to make herself the laughing-stock of all Bath, by going thither under the guidance and direction of a strange out-of-the-way old being, (for so she had the impudence to style me,) who was no less antiquated in opinion than in appearance. She added, that, for her part, she had no satisfaction in the world, she was so neglected by her husband, and so worried by me; and that she would much rather die at once than make herself so superlatively ridiculous!’

“Poor Lady Flora!” said Rosina.

“Poor Lady Flora! (echoed the old gentleman,) poor Lady Devil! She’s greatly entitled to commiseration, to be sure. Many other things of the like nature were added by her to this fine declaration; whereupon I spoke to the point, at least three hours by my watch, and endeavoured to convince her that there was neither common honesty nor justice in leaving the man she had married in the lurch in so unconscionable a manner, after having embroiled his circumstances, and wantonly

wantonly dissipated his substance, by her lavish prodigality. I told her that all we required of her was to keep herself alive two years, nine months, and twelve days longer; and that, at the expiration of that term, if she still continued in her inclination to leave this world of vanity and vexation, she might depart in peace, without let or hinderance, after having executed her last will and testament in proper form, and to her husband's liking."

" Well, I dare say she was greatly obliged to you for this kind permission."

" Obligated to me! No, truly; she has no more notion of gratitude than a she-bear. Instead of that she told me, that when Harry Hume was courting her, he vowed and swore he was wholly uninfluenced by any view to her fortune, and that, since he had so grossly deceived her, he deserved to be punished for his treachery."

" I never heard her Ladyship say any thing so much to the purpose," said Fitzosborne.

" And she said, moreover, (resumed Nettleby,) that all the satisfaction she had in leaving the
G 5 world,

world, was the thought of the mortification her death would occasion to her husband and me; that now she believed she should have two very sincere mourners at her funeral; but that, if she lived till she became of age, their tears would be converted to laughter, or words to that purpose. 'There's a vixen for you! and I dare say the little venomous scorpion will keep her word, and sting herself to death out of mere malice prepense. And what amends have we? The law affords us none. It's a shocking grievance that no way can be found to prevent people from giving us the slip in this unconscionable manner. That was the way the defendant in your case served us, (turning to Rosina;) it was one of the most provoking things that ever occurred in the course of my practice. To think that, just when we were on the point of obtaining such a signal victory; for the law-agent I employed by Mrs. Fitzosborne's desire wrote me word that we should infallibly get a decree in our favour the ensuing term; to think that when we had thus run the nefarious old badger to his last shift, he should suddenly earth himself in the grave, from whence, you know, it is both morally and physically impossible to unkennel him, get off with flying colours, and leave us all at a nonplus with his pretty farce of a will. This

is

is a new way of paying old debts, with a vengeance. A great obligation, indeed, to will people their lawful right. However, child, you have still some satisfaction in your power: the ten thousand pounds being a legacy left without any conditions whatsoever, you may proceed on new grounds, and file a bill against the heirs of the old villain for the recovery of the issues and profits of your estate, during the long term of years which you and your progenitors were unlawfully kept out of possession."

"Indeed, (said Rosina,) I am perfectly satisfied with the old gentleman's distribution of his effects, and wish for nothing but to enjoy my allotted portion without future litigation."

"You are a simpleton, child, (returned he;) but your husband will probably view this matter in a different light. This contempt of riches, which you without doubt think very heroical, will appear to him exceedingly absurd; at least if he possesses a scruple of common understanding. As it is currently reported, (continued he, turning to Fitzosborne,) that a marriage is to take place between you and the plaintiff, as soon as the term of her non-age is completed, you would do well to

turn your attention to this matter, and commence the proceedings without loss of time."

Rosina arose in confusion; and apprehensive that he would pursue the subject still farther, turned towards the door.

"Where are you going, child? I have somewhat farther to urge on this matter, which may be well worthy your attention."

"Rosina is subject to sudden returns of illness, (said Mrs. Fitzosborne;) she has been from her apartment longer than usual."

"Well, I won't detain her two minutes. I say, child, you are very right to pay a proper attention to your health, especially during your non-age; for you must be conscious of the great obligations you owe Mr. and Mrs. Fitzosborne, whose charity and benevolence have been, under God, the source of every blessing and advantage you have enjoyed in this world; and though you have at present no husband to defraud by your untimely death, (as that little viper Lady Flora has,) you must yet be sensible that it behoves you to take especial care of your health, on account of these
your

your benefactors: for, though the law might allow them out of your effects some compensation for the great trouble and expence they have put themselves to in your maintenance, cloathing, and education, yet you could not either in reason, conscience, or justice, think of putting them off without some more substantial remuneration. It is true, that if you should live another year, and be joined in wedlock to this young man here present ——”

“ You had better retire, Miss Mortimer,) said young Fitzosborne, out of patience at Nettleby's absurd and impertinent loquacity;) you grow pale; you are ill.”

“ What a mighty hurry you are in: let her stay where she is. I have but three words to say, and they greatly tend to your own future advantage. I say, if by due observance and proper attention, this girl should be kept alive until the period when you may prudently form an union with her ——”

“ You may spare yourself the trouble, Sir, of saying any thing on the subject, (interrupted Fitzosborne,

osborne, angrily;) neither Miss Mortimer nor myself have an idea of forming any such union."

"The more fool you, then; for if the issues and profits should be recovered, and that the plaintiff should hold out another year, as it is very possible she may, with good management ——"

"Is this to be endured? (angrily interrupted Fitzosborne.) Come, Rosina, you must retire: you are ill."

He led her into an adjoining drawing-room.

"Live another year! (he exclaimed as he shut the door.) The unfeeling monster! the callous barbarian! You will live, I hope, many years, years of prosperity and happiness, with him whom you have destined to be happy; your unknown friend and favourite. But for me ——. Yet what right have I to repine! You never flattered my affection; that justice I must at least allow you."

"O, you deceive yourself, (cried Rosina.) I have no friend, no favourite, whom I can make happy, otherwise than by my wishes and my prayers: and could they avail, for whom should they be.

be offered with more fervent solicitations than for the son of my best loved friend."

"Why then, (replied Fitzosborne,) why then will you persist in this distracting silence? Could I penetrate this dark transaction, I might find some certain ground to proceed on; but now, all is error, perplexity, and doubt: it is past endurance. But one medium remains. Would to Heaven I had embraced it before this last unhappy meeting had inflicted new wounds on my heart!"

"Ah, to what do you allude?" said Rosina.

"My resolves, as well as my actions, (returned Fitzosborne,) are still in your power. Be explicit, and command them as you will."

"At present I cannot."

"Then my resolution is taken."

"Yet hear me, Fitzosborne."

"On one subject only will I listen to. I have already heard too much. I love you; to what excess I will not say: but my reason will never
stoop

stoop to be made the dupe of a blind infatuated passion. The woman to whom I voluntarily devote my heart, shall be the absolute mistress of its affections; no gloomy doubt shall repress its tenderness; no shade of suspicion shall sully its esteem. Rosina, (continued he, throwing his arms round her, and pressing her to his breast,) consent, then, to my entreaties; drive me not from my friends and country by this cruel obscurity; throw off this impervious veil; let me read your heart; something within whispers me that the inspection will do honour to its purity. Oh, Rosina, why are you not as candid as you are lovely !”

Rosina answered only by her tears.

“ Speak to me, confide in me, (continued Fitzosborne;) only satisfy my doubts, and I will bind myself by the most solemn promises ——”

“ And dare I (said Rosina) extort promises from another, at the moment when I violate my own? No, Fitzosborne, though I value your esteem, my own is yet dearer.”

“ Then we are both resolved,” said Fitzosborne.

“ I am

“ I am resolved,” said Rosina.

“ ’Tis well, (said Fitzosborne.) On my return to Ireland, (resumed he, after a pause,) had I found you here, and found you such as in imagination I had pictured to myself, unrivalled in loveliness, and inviolate in fame ; not the gold of Peru, the gems of Golconda —. But what avail these regrets ! You say you are determined.”

“ I said so, (returned Rosina;) but you, Sir, shall not on that account be compelled to quit your father’s house : I will myself remove.”

“ What, (interrupted Fitzosborne,) to remain here after you were gone ; to continue in a place which would eternally remind me of what it is most my interest to forget ! No, Rosina, it must henceforth be my task to stifle, not to cherish remembrance : I must seek by a far different course the oblivion of my sufferings. But think not, (continued he, smiling angrily,) think not I allude to that last desperate oblivion, the supreme ambition of despairing lovers. In travel, in amusement, in dissipation, I will seek the Lethean charm ; and if I find it not in these, the charms of some as lovely,

lovely, and less mysterious woman, may complete the forgetfulness."

"I sincerely hope and believe they will, (returned Rosina, stung to the soul by this last insinuation,) though you need not, I am convinced, go so far in search of a remedy, nor have recourse to so many different expedients to effect a cure."

She left him with these words, and retired to her apartment, with a heart bursting with vexation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.**FITZOSBORNE RESOLVES TO DEPART.**

A thousand oaths, upon record,
Are not so sacred as her word!

SWIFT.

ROSINA one moment resented Fitzosborne's obstinacy, and the next lamented the necessity which doomed her to a silence that threatened to separate them for ever. But she determined to control her emotions, and conceal her regret at an event which she could not prevent without dishonour.

Their next interview was marked by a mutual, but awkward affectation of ease and indifference, which

which strongly denoted the sensations it was intended to conceal. Two days afterwards, Fitzosborne mentioned a design of going to London, with an air of studied carelessness. At this intimation, Mrs. Fitzosborne and Rosina looked at each other; for both regarded it as a prelude to information more distressing. Mrs. Fitzosborne hinted her suspicions to him, and he candidly acknowledged his design was to go from London to France. But, though the presence of Rosina induced this generous friend to repress her grief and disappointment at this intelligence, she easily penetrated her feelings; and her consciousness of being the cause that separated this amiable and beloved son from his mother, was a cruel addition to her sufferings. She would have persuaded herself, that the painful emotions with which she beheld the preparations that were making for his departure, originated principally in this motive. "Did I not love Lord Raymond, (said she to herself;) and though his unworthiness eradicated this first impression from my heart, can one passion be so easily succeeded by another? But why thus scrutinize my feelings? Ah! if the departure of Fitzosborne is to make me miserable, what matters it whether that wretchedness proceeds from love or friendship! O, Tudor, generous, but mistaken friend,

friend, why did you release me from a confinement, where, 'ere now, I should have found the final oblivion of all my solitudes !”

Distressed, agitated, and dejected, she retired early to her apartment, in order to avoid meeting Fitzosborne, who had declared his intention of setting out in two days. She imagined the affliction she could no longer conceal would afford too great a triumph to his vanity; and she sometimes determined to see him no more. She felt her fever returning rapidly; her ill symptoms were too decided to be longer dissembled. Mrs. Fitzosborne perceived them the following day with terror and anxiety; the physician was recalled, and his report was ill calculated to dispel her uneasiness.

At night Mrs. Fitzosborne watched by her bedside: once, when she fancied Rosina slept, she sighed deeply.

“ Oh, my friend, (cried Rosina, starting from a broken slumber,) am I doomed to be a never-failing source of distress to you ! Must I now deprive you of your son !”

“ As

“As to the departure of my son, (returned Mrs. Fitzosborne,) it gives me no very serious uneasiness. I have no reason to doubt his safe return: but to see you, Rosina, thus sinking under the weight of concealed distress, is more, I acknowledge, than my fortitude can support. I have hitherto respected your silence; obstinately as you persist in it, and inconceivable as are its motives, I have used no arguments to combat it: but now, when your life seems ready to become the victim of it, I can no longer persuade myself to acquiesce in its propriety.”

“Am I then (cried Rosina) reduced to the cruel alternative of violating my engagements, or losing your esteem? Is there no medium? But, perhaps I may yet find one. O, my friend, leave me to reflect on it to-night; to-morrow you shall be made acquainted with my determination.”

Mrs. Fitzosborne quitted Rosina. The medium which had presented itself to her thoughts, was to write to Tudor, to solicit his permission to reveal his secret to Mrs. Fitzosborne and her son; a permission she had no doubt of obtaining, though she knew he would regard such a confidence as
equi-

equivalent to a general publication; for his knowledge of human nature would render him little inclined to hope that two persons so deeply interested in Rosina's vindication, would be silent on a subject that so nearly concerned it. But she felt, that, at a period like the present, her scruples of delicacy ought to yield to strong necessity; and she had the satisfaction of being conscious, that, whatever doubts Tudor might entertain on the subject, his secret would remain as secure in the breasts of the Fitzosbornes, as it had hitherto rested in her own. She felt her fever so high, and her head so disturbed, that, fearing if she delayed writing till the morrow, she should then be incapable of the office, she dismissed the attendant Mrs. Fitzosborne had left to watch by her, and sprung out of bed. The violent pain she suffered in her head, and the tremor that shook her frame, whilst she wrote the following incoherent lines, impressed her with a strong conviction that they were the last her hand should ever trace.

THE

THE LETTER.

BEFORE this letter reaches you, I may have ceased to exist, but I have not ceased to be faithful.

Ah, Tudor, when that promise passed my lips, I was little conscious of the difficulty that awaited its performance. My conduct has been arraigned, my innocence has been suspected; suspected, too, by a person whose approbation is most dear to my heart; and I have not dared to speak in its vindication. Merciful Heaven, why did you not permit me to waste the short remainder of my days in that dreary confinement! But for your benevolence, I should 'ere now have been at peace!

From that benevolence I demand another sacrifice: write to Mrs. Fitzosborne and her son; acquaint them with the true circumstances of my concealment: your secret will be as inviolate in their bosoms as it has hitherto been in mine. Whatever may be my fate, I shall now yield to it without regret, satisfied in the assurance, that you, who have been the guardian of my honour, will be the assertor of my innocence; that it will arise
with

with unfulfilled lustre from my tomb ; and the eyes which have been turned with disdain from Rosina, will pay a bitter tribute to her memory.

Adieu, my ever dear, and ever valued friend !
May your temporal rewards be adequate to your virtues ; and may those virtues be crowned with superior honour and felicity in that blessed region, where, I trust, you will one day meet

Your

ROSINA.

Rosina sealed this letter, and recalling her attendant, gave it to her, with directions that it should be sent early next morning to the post.

Next day, when Mrs. Fitzosborne visited her, she found her much worse.

“ Well, my dear friend, (said Rosina,) I have now the satisfaction to know that my vindication, though late, will be certain ; that Hector Fitzosborne, severe and unbelieving as he is, will hereafter be forced to do justice to the honour he suspected.”

Mrs. Fitzosborne quitted Rosina in tears. She repeated her words to her son.

“ Severe and unbelieving! (repeated Fitzosborne.) Heaven is my witness, I deserve not these reproaches: I suspect not her honour: to the secret conviction of my own heart she is fully justified.”

“ Why, then, (returned Mrs. Fitzosborne,) do you fly and shun her?”

“ Because I would shun the wretchedness I have no longer patience to endure; because I would fly from the doubts which torment and distract me. Who is this stranger with whom she corresponds? for whom she expresses a tenderness so fervent, a veneration so enthusiastic? Why are her lips to move at his command? What is the nature of those rights by which he has rendered himself the arbiter of her actions?”

“ Of whatever nature they may be, (replied Mrs. Fitzosborne,) I am convinced they interfere not with any you can hope to establish.”

“ And

“ And what rights can I hope to establish ?”

“ The most sacred and tender. Rosina loves you.”

“ Rosina loves me ! (repeated Fitzosborne in a tremulous and suppressed voice.) Ah, I have too long suffered myself to be seduced by the fantastic hope of inspiring her with tenderness. I have at length brought myself to renounce it; and beware, beware how you recall it !”

“ The hope is not fantastic ; and if she lives —”

“ If she lives ! (interrupted Fitzosborne.) Is her life then in danger ?”

“ Can you doubt it ? Yes, it is in danger which I believe to be imminent: and to shock you yet more, your own proud inflexibility has contributed to that danger. But her predictions will be accomplished, and at too late a period ; a period when repentance and regret will be unavailing, you will be forced to acknowledge and recant your errors.”

“ I recant them now, (said Fitzosborne, in a voice half stifled by his strong emotion.) Is it now too late? Let me see Rosina: let me convince her of my unreserved confidence in her honour; let me assure her of my contrition, and implore her forgiveness.”

CH A P. XVII.

THE TRIUMPH OF TENDERNESS.

And pity now, and love, by turns suggest
More fond compliance to his softening breast.

MRS. FITZOSBORNE eagerly seized this moment of relenting softness; and, after some necessary preparations, conducted her son to Rosina's apartment.

“ Rosina, (said Fitzosborne, hastily approaching her bed-side,) forgive my presumption in soliciting
this

this interview; the hour of distress is not that of punctilio. I have been termed severe and unbelieving, inexorable and obstinate. I come to evince the injustice of these accusations, or at least to demonstrate, that if these errors once were mine, they are now so no longer. I await not the promised eclaireissement to declare my fullest confidence in your honour. I never doubted it, but for an interval, when the evidence of strongly-concurring circumstances would almost have rendered unbelief infatuation."

"If you doubted not my honour, (said Rosina, in a softened accent,) why then did you treat me with such harsh severity?"

"I know not; I was restless; I was wretched; sometimes animated with wavering hopes, but oftener distracted with jealous anxieties: the pride of reason, too, forbade my unresisting submission to the blind impulses of my heart. But now I renounce it."

"I demand not the renunciation of reason, (returned Rosina;) I require only a suspension of judgment: appearances are undoubtedly against me, but candour must acknowledge their frequent fallacy.

fallacy. In circumstances the most dreadful, I found safety and protection; in a prison, an honourable retreat; and in him who was destined to be my gaoler, a disinterested friend, a noble liberator."

"I doubt it not, (said Fitzosborne.) Were I to judge from my own feelings, I should believe that "*something holy lodges in that breast*;" that no unhallowed passion could exist in your presence; that you might pass "*in unblench'd majesty*" thro' gangs of fierce banditti, and hordes of wandering Tartars. And I will trust to them; they do not, they cannot deceive me. Receive me then, Rosina, (continued he, dropping on his knees beside her,) receive me to your forgiveness, to your friendship, to your tenderness, I would add, if I dared. My doubts are at an end, my scruples are vanished; the testimonies of all mankind concurring in your favour, could add nothing to my confidence, nothing to my affection."

"This is indeed a triumph, (said Rosina, in half-suffocated accents.) Oh, Fitzosborne, you are worthy of your mother! I am oppressed beneath this weight of obligation! How, how shall I repay it!"

"By

"By giving me a title to the tender name you have often bestowed on me, (said Mrs. Fitzosborne,) by making me in reality your mother."

"Rosina, (said Fitzosborne, seizing her hand,) shall I owe this last best gift to my mother? For her sake will you be mine?"

"No, no, Fitzosborne, (said Rosina, withdrawing her hand.) "The woman to whom I devote my heart shall be the absolute mistress of its affections; no gloomy doubt shall repress its tenderness, no shade of suspicion shall sully its esteem." These were your own words; I can never forget them; and they contain a resolution worthy of being adhered to."

"I uttered them in resentment, (returned Fitzosborne:) the sentiments which dictated them are passed away."

"But they may return, (said Rosina.) The jealous flame which suspicious circumstances kindled in your breast, though stifled for the present, may revive in future. Hear, then, my decided and unalterable resolution. I will listen to no professions of tenderness, till the hour of my vin-

dication arrives ; and should any perverse accident defer it even to the most distant period, that circumstance shall not influence my determination. Meantime, let us converse on those terms of fraternal and sisterly affection which were once so endearing, and so sufficient for our happiness."

" Fraternal and sisterly affection ! (said Fitzosborne.) O, how cold ! But you, Rosina, will find no difficulty in forbearing to pass those frozen bounds : your feelings are for ever subservient to your reason."

" And you trespass already," said Rosina.

" I do, (said Fitzosborne.) Forgive me. My wishes are wild and unreasonable. But an hour since I was miserable ; now I am happy. I ought to be contented with this comparative felicity. Jacob served seven years for Rachael : was his tenderness more persevering than mine ! But I have already done more. His attachment was fostered by the presence of her he loved, and cherished by her smiles ; mine was clouded by absence, chilled by indifference, almost extinguished in despair !"

" Well,

" Well, well, (said Rosina,) pursue your parallel no farther: you know this subject is interdicted. Besides, though my heart may be the lighter for this conversation, its effects on my head are not equally salutary."

" I will go then, (said Fitzosborne, hastily rising;) but for my sake, for Heaven's sake, my Rosina, be strictly attentive to your health. Ah, if it should be already too late!"

" But last night I fancied it was, (said Rosina,) but now I think otherwise; so powerfully do our wishes operate on our belief."

Mrs. Fitzosborne's joy at this interview was repress'd by her melancholy apprehensions in respect to Rosina's state of health; but these fears by degrees subsided into a pleasing security, for she grew better every hour.

A week had now elapsed since she had written to Tudor, and she awaited his answer with uneasy expectation. In the evening, as Mrs. Fitzosborne sat alone with her son, they were informed that a strange gentleman enquired for Miss Mortimer, who, on being told she was confined by illness,

H 5

earnestly,

earnestly requested to see Mrs. Fitzosborne, or Mr. Fitzosborne, junior. At this information, Fitzosborne started from his seat, and followed the servant to the parlour, where the stranger waited for him. He was struck with the appearance of this person as he entered the room: his countenance was pale, his dress disordered, his air agitated; he wore his left arm in a scarf.

"You, Sir, I presume, are Mr. Fitzosborne, junior."

Fitzosborne bowed.

"I come, Sir, to enquire for Miss Mortimer; but I am informed she is ill. Is she very ill?"

"She has been very ill, Sir: she is now better."

"Is she much better, Sir? (eagerly enquired the stranger.) Is she out of danger?"

"We hope so, Sir."

"Thank God, thank God! May I see her, Sir?"

Fitz-

Fitzosborne hesitated.

" My business is important. If she is alive, she will see me."

" She admits no strangers, Sir."

" Strangers ! My name is Tudor : be so good as to allow it to be mentioned to her. Perhaps, Sir, you have heard it before."

" I have not had that honour, Sir," returned Fitzosborne, coldly.

" Dear faithful Rosina ! (exclaimed Tudor,) you have then persevered to the last ! Noble, honourable creature ! May I not see her, Sir ?"

Astonished at the warmth of these effusions, the strong emotion of this stranger, who seemed to have so deep, so fond an interest in Rosina, puzzled to conceive the nature of his connexion with her, and almost tempted to fear that it interfered with his own hopes and wishes, Fitzosborne stood without replying, whilst Tudor kept his eyes earnestly fixed on him. In this interval of silence, Mrs. Fitzosborne, whose curiosity had not been

less powerful than her son's, though her motion had been less rapid, entered the room.

"I need not enquire, Madam, (said Tudor,) whether you are the generous protectress of Miss Mortimer. I recollect your features from your picture, which she wore next her heart, and which she has often shewed me. To your goodness I shall hope to be indebted for an interview with her, which this gentleman seems inclined to refuse me."

"Miss Mortimer, Sir, is mistress of her own time; but in her present state of health ——."

"My name is Tudor, Madam. If she is alive, she will see me, my errand is urgent. Pray let her be informed I am here. I would entreat you to forgive this trouble, but that I know you will hereafter think it recompensed."

Mrs. Fitzosborne turned towards the door.

"I will myself announce the gentleman," said Fitzosborne, hastily preventing her, and eager to observe what effect the arrival of this stranger would produce on Rosina.

Rosina had that day been well enough to sit in the dressing-room, adjoining her chamber: he found her there.

“ A stranger enquires for you, Rosina,” said he.

“ Who? (cried Rosina eagerly.) What stranger? Has he brought me a letter?”

“ His name is Tudor,” said Fitzosborne, fixing his eyes stedfastly on her.

“ Tudor! (exclaimed Rosina, clasping her hands, and springing from her seat;) what unexpected happiness! When did he arrive? How long has he been here? Where is he?” flying to the door.

“ Repress your impatience, Madam, (said Fitzosborne.) He only waits your permission to attend you here.”

“ O, let him come then! Merciful Heaven, how unhop'd was his presence! Go, dear Fitzosborne, and bring him to me instantly!”

Fitz-

Fitzosborne went no farther than the antichamber: he sent Rosina's message by a servant. Mrs. Fitzosborne appeared immediately afterwards, followed by Tudor. Rosina sprang to meet him, and threw herself into his arms.

“ Rosina, my lovely, my faithful Rosina! (cried Tudor,) speak peace to my terrifying apprehensions; tell me I come not too late to save you.”

Rosina answered by a shower of tears, whilst Tudor tenderly supported her in his arms.

What a scene was this for Fitzosborne, who observed them from the adjoining apartment: his prospects seemed blasted, his hopes annihilated; resentment, despair, and jealousy agitated his bosom with alternate bitterness.

Tudor, meantime, led Rosina to a seat, and placed himself beside her.

CHAP. XVIII.

AN ECLAIRCISSEMENT.

“ I COME, Rosina, (said Tudor,) to give you a full release from the engagement you so generously entered into, and so faithfully adhered to.”

Mrs. Fitzosborne turned towards the door.

“ Stay, Madam, (said Tudor, perceiving her intention,) Miss Mortimer has no longer a secret to withhold from you. Whatever doubts a silence too long persevered in may have given rise to, I come to dissipate them.”

"Where is Hector Fitzosborne?" said Rosina, looking round.

Perceiving him in the anti-chamber, she went to him, but he turned from her.

"The hour is come, (said she, with firmness,) when you shall blush for this groundless suspicion. Come and listen to my promised vindication."

"To nothing that proceeds from the lips of that stranger can I listen with pleasure."

"O, what blind perverseness! (said Rosina.) Is this the implicit confidence you promised me? But come, we will force you to do justice to my truth, and to the merit of this generous friend."

He followed her into the dressing-room, and seated himself with an air of gloomy dissatisfaction.

"Rosina, (said Tudor,) how shall we begin this explanation, which has been deferred too long for your happiness, and the satisfaction of your friends. All the atonement I can now make, is a communication the most unreserved and explicit: my own errors shall be revealed without disguise
or.

or palliation. But think not I rank amongst that number my recent passion for you; a passion which first taught me to be generous, excited the nobler feelings of my bosom, and supplied me with arms to combat even itself: for, though you may think there is little gallantry in the acknowledgement, I confess I have conquered it, pretty tolerably at least."

Fitzosborne raised his eyes to him with surprise and attention.

"I perceive your astonishment at this avowal, Sir, (said Tudor, addressing him.) Concluding from your own feelings, perhaps, you imagine a passion inspired by Miss Mortimer is never to be eradicated; but you must recollect that thirty-six is the age of reason, not that of romance; and, though the latter may applaud a persistence in an unrewarded and unreturned attachment, the former must reprobate such hopeless absurdity. But come, Rosina, let us begin: our tale is complex; it must be divided into parts, and rehearsed alternately."

"But how is this?" said Rosina, perceiving his arm in a scarf.

"O,

"O, an accident, a trifle," said he, with some embarrassment.

"But how did it happen?"

"I will tell you hereafter, if I recollect it; but let us now gratify the curiosity of your friends."

The various sensations with which Hector Fitzosborne and his mother listened to the circumstances related by Tudor and Rosina, may be easily imagined: their admiration seemed equally divided between the fortitude of Rosina and the generosity of Tudor. During the continuance of this affecting narrative, Mrs. Fitzosborne often wiped off the tears that flowed copiously from her eyes, and Hector turned aside his head, to conceal the drops which burst from his. At its conclusion, he arose, and advancing hastily to Tudor, eagerly grasped his hands.

"Generous man! (said he, in a voice that spoke his emotion,) to whom I owe every thing, the life, the liberty, the restoration of my Rosina! How shall I express my gratitude, how evince my admiration!"

"If

"If I have been so fortunate as to contribute to your happiness, (replied Tudor, returning his pressure with a friendly warmth,) let me be repaid by sharing your friendship."

"Friendship (said Fitzosborne) requires equality; but I feel my own inferiority. Such worth as your's seems to demand those more fervent and exalted sentiments of veneration which we should offer to a superior being."

"I feel (replied Tudor, smiling) that there is nothing more humiliating than unmerited applause. I doubt not that these too-lavish commendations are very seriously meant, and very sincerely uttered; but to a man who is conscious of possessing more than his proportion of human frailty, they have greatly the air of a burlesque. Besides, after all, I only temporized and compounded matters; I accepted Rosina's offers of secrecy, and suffered a suspicion to rest on her reputation, which, had I been truly generous, I should have vindicated at the expence of my own. Accident, however, has rendered to her honour the justice which I withheld from it; our private machinations have been revealed to the face of day; and Rosina deceives herself, if she imagines she owes me any gratitude
for

for the permission I have given her to publish her adventures."

"I think (said Rosina) no circumstance can either augment or lessen the gratitude I feel, and must for ever cherish for you. But the hints you have dropped awaken my curiosity. By what means ——."

"You must suspend it for the present, (said Tudor, rising;) to-morrow it shall be gratified. You are an unconscionable girl, and would allow me no respite, though I have travelled from London in three days, and have been but two hours on shore."

Mrs. Fitzosborne now insisted on his taking some refreshment; and when he spoke of going to an hotel, his design was so strenuously opposed by Mrs. Fitzosborne, Hector, and Rosina, that he consented to their wishes, and with his natural frankness, agreed to be their guest during his continuance in Dublin.

Perceiving Rosina exhausted with the length of the conversation, and agitated with the emotions it had excited, they left her to repose herself; and
Tudor

Tudor indulged Mrs. Fitzosborne and her son with a repetition of those circumstances of which a regard to Rosina's peace had induced him to refuse her the detail: but as his knowledge of some of them was superficial, his relation was cursory: they shall therefore be presented at large to the reader.

C H A P. XIX.

ADVENTURES OF THE LITTLE CROOKBACK.

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to scourge us.

SHAKESPEAR.

IT has already been said, that when Rosina communicated to Mrs. Evelyn the pleasing account of her restoration to her friends and fortune, attentive to the interests of Tudor, and apprehensive lest the intelligence of these events might reach

reach the knowledge of the Earl of L——, she had insisted on the most profound secrecy in respect to them; and her injunction had been faithfully complied with. By this means, her fate remained an impenetrable enigma to all her other connexions in Wales. None was more tenderly interested in it than her former friend, Mr. Lewis. He had himself travelled many miles, and used many means to discover the persons who had carried her away; and when one expedient failed, another had flattered him with a prospect of better success, until the perseverance of hope was utterly lost in repeated disappointment. The autumn had glided away in these fruitless enquiries; the ensuing winter brought with it no tidings of Rosina. About this period it became necessary that he should go to London, to receive a legacy which had been bequeathed him by a gentleman who had been his god-father. Previous to his departure, he waited on Mrs. Evelyn, and promised before his return to visit her son Richard, whose present residence was at an academy forty miles from London, and bring her a faithful account of his situation and attainments. After having finished his business in London, he performed his engagement, and was received by Mr. Stanton, the gentleman who kept the academy, with hospitable politeness, and

and by his friend Richard with many clamorous demonstrations of regard and satisfaction. He consented to remain with them one day and one night; and though he did not perceive in Richard's demeanour any great advancement in politeness, his master, who had found the art of conciliating his affection by the patient gentleness of his manners, gave hopes, that, however arduous the task of subduing his vulgarity, and weaning him from his favourite follies, he did not yet absolutely despair of its accomplishment; and he added, that the natural goodness of heart which he discovered in his pupil encouraged him to perseverance.

At night, Richard accompanied Lewis to his chamber. As he was to depart before day-light in the morning, he wished to have some private conversation with him relative to his family and friends in Wales. In the course of this interview, Richard enquired what was become of little Rosy; and Lewis gave him an account of that part of her adventure which had fallen under his knowledge, to which Richard listened with surprise and compassion, little conceiving that he had any share in her misfortune; he expressed his wonder at whose instigation she had been carried away, since it seemed evident that neither Lord Raymond nor
her

her own friends had any part in the transaction. "And as to Sir Gregory; (continued he,) if he was ever so much in love, he has not spunk enough to dream of running away with a girl. But to be sure, so likely a girl did not want admirers before she came to Wales; and, in all probability, some ranting blade of a wild Irishman has whisked her away with him to his bogs and mountains."

As the night was pretty far advanced, Richard retired to his chamber, where he soon fell asleep, and Lewis departed early next morning.

In the course of the following day some accidental circumstances recalled to Richard's memory the intelligence he had received from Lewis relative to Rosina; and recollecting the suspicions which his own artifices had infused into the mind of the Earl, and the advice which he had given him to take an active part in preventing the designed dishonour, the coincidence of time and circumstances rushed into his mind with instant and irresistible conviction, and the penetrating sagacity of his character traced Rosina's misfortune to the interested policy of the Earl, who, he no longer doubted, had sacrificed her to the purpose of averting from his family the fancied disgrace. Struck
with

with horror, and stung with compunction, he determined immediately to pursue and overtake Lewis, disclose to him his suspicions, and with him concert measures for the discovery and relief of Rosina, if her situation yet admitted of any. He rushed half frantic into the stable, and seizing a horse which he found ready saddled there, he called to his man Gryffith to follow him on another, and took the road to London in pursuit of Lewis, who had set off six hours before him. In his perturbation, he had forgotten his boots and spurs; he rode a heavy draft-horse, which, spite of the unmerciful flagellation bestowed on him, kept no pace with the impatience of his rider. Jaded with a violence of exercise, to which he was wholly unaccustomed, at the end of twenty miles the beast stumbled at every step. Richard, however, relaxed nothing of his discipline until he found himself within ten miles of London, when finding the absolute necessity of stopping to bait, and an inn opportunely presenting itself, he turned into the yard with such velocity, that his horse striking his breast against the pole of a carriage which was just then driving out of it, fell on his side on the pavement, and Richard was taken from under him evidently dreadfully wounded, and to appearance lifeless.

As his appearance and equipage were not calculated to inspire any respectable ideas of his quality, he was carried into a barn, and deposited on a heap of straw, where he lay, an object of compassion to every one, but of interest to none ; and might have lain until he breathed his last, had not his trusty 'squire, Gryffith, come to his assistance in this extremity.

Gryffith, on finding his beloved master in so deplorable a situation, drew all the people who remained in the house around him by his passionate lamentations ; and as he did not fail to announce to them the quality and consequence of the wounded person, they all became eager to atone for their past neglect. Richard was removed from his bed of straw to the best bed-chamber in the house ; a surgeon was sent for ; and whilst his wounds were dressing, he began to exhibit the first symptoms of returning life. Gryffith, by promises of ample compensation, prevailed on the surgeon to stay and watch him all night, and very prudently dispatched a courier to acquaint Mr. Stanton with the misfortune of his pupil.

CHAP. XX.

CROOKBACK'S ADVENTURE CONTINUED.

RICHARD, meantime, recovered his speech, but his fever was high, and his intellects disordered. He complained greatly of the violence of his pain; talked wildly of Rosina, and called on Lewis and Lord Raymond. Towards morning, the drugs exhibited by the surgeon, produced a salutary effect; he fell into a slumber, from which he awoke more composed, and perfectly rational. Immediately recollecting the transactions of the preceding day, and the motive which had engaged him in this unfortunate journey, he instantly dispatched Gryffith with an injunction to go to London, find out Lewis and Lord Raymond; acquaint them both that he had matters of the last importance to communicate, and prevail on them to come to him without loss of time.

Gryffith executed his commission with great punctuality; he easily found Lewis, and as easily induced him to fly to the consolation of the unfortunate Richard, at whose unhappy accident he was greatly shocked and affected; but when he presented himself at Lord Raymond's, the servants refused to disturb his Lordship, who was not yet risen; and his tears and supplications would probably have been ineffectual, had he not fortunately been seen by his old friend, Mr. Frizzle, Lord Raymond's favourite valet-de-chambre, who had attended him in his expedition to Wales, and whose loquacity had supplied Richard with the groundwork of those disturbances which he had so ingeniously fomented, and of which he now so bitterly lamented the consequences. To this person Gryffith explained his difficulties, and preferred his petition; and though Mr. Frizzle had long made the character of his noble patron the model of his imitation, as he had not yet been able to emulate the fashionable obduracy of his heart, he could not avoid feeling some commiseration for the disaster of his quondam confidant and associate; he therefore bid Gryffith be of good cheer, and promised to prevail on his Lordship to comply with the solicitations he had been deputed to make.

The

The friendly valet found it necessary to exert all his eloquence in the performance of this promise. The morning was cold and wet ; his Lordship had been out late, and the business on which he was summoned, was peculiarly ill suited with his feelings ; for though some have endeavoured to prove the house of mourning to be better than that of feasting, it would have been difficult to have made Lord Raymond a convert to such doctrine.

“ Not yet eleven, (cried he, looking at his watch) and I was out 'till five—how it blows and rains ! (drawing the cloaths about his shoulders) what the devil put it into the puppy's head to send for me ! if the little mischievous baboon has broken his own bones, can't he get them set to rights without my being present at the operation ?”

“ But his servant says, (returned Mr. Frizzle) that Mr. Richard has matters of the last importance to communicate to your Lordship.”

“ Matters of importance—ridiculous !”

“ He says his young master has something that lies heavy on his mind.”

“ There let it lie, for ought I care—the robbery of some orchard or hen roost, perhaps. Why should I be pestered with his last speech and dying words; I have no authority to receive his confessions, and give him absolution.”

“ Perhaps he may know something relative to the carrying off the young lady that—that—that your Lordship used sometimes to visit,” said Mr. Frizzle, throwing in a hint, which he fancied might work upon his feelings.

“ It is not probable—how the devil should he know any thing of the matter. However (after musing for a moment) I will go; his mother might perhaps be displeased at my refusal, and I owe her some obligation; so get my cloaths, and order the chariot.”

Thus curiosity, co-operating with a sense of decency, effected what friendship had supplicated, and compassion dictated in vain. As his Lordship's hunters were swifter of foot than the hack Mr. Lewis had hired for the occasion, he arrived at the inn where Richard lay, at the moment when Lewis alighted at the door. After saluting each other, they enquired for the surgeon, who still remained

mained in the house, and on consulting him in respect to the situation of his patient, were by him informed, that his left thigh, which had been dreadfully fractured, began to exhibit such evident symptoms of a mortification, that he was persuaded nothing but the amputation of the part could save his life.

C H A P. XXI.

CONVERSATION OF RICHARD AND HIS
VISITORS.

LORD Raymond was somewhat shocked, and Lewis extremely affected at this melancholy intelligence. As soon as informed of their arrival, Richard gave orders for their admission.

“ You find me here in a sad pickle, (striving to raise his head from the pillow when he saw them) never did poor devil get so damnable a squelsh ! and the worst of it is, I can’t help believing that it is a judgment on me for some of my misdoings—though God knows I never intended to carry the joke as far as that came to ! I thought you would never come—you are the two people in the world I wanted most to see. As to you, my Lord, to tell the truth, for I never liked to flatter any man at any time, and it would ill become me to go out of the world with a lie in my mouth : I say if I sent for you at this time, it was not out of any regard that I have to your company ; for I know well enough what sort of metal you courtiers are made of ; and I’m sure you would not care if myself and all my seed, breed and generation, were at the devil, so as you could serve your own turn by it.”

Lord Raymond was beginning to express his surprise and sorrow that his dear Richard should entertain an opinion so injurious to the sentiments of respect, friendship and gratitude, he had always cherished for his family, &c. &c.

“ Look ye, my Lord, (interrupted Richard) all this may be very pretty talk at court ; but fair words

words butter no parsnips ; and when a man has but two or three hours to live, which I verily believe to be my case, it's hard if he can't employ them to better purpose than listening to fine speeches, and paying French compliments. At present I can tell you, I have other fish to fry. I am afraid I have been the occasion of a plaguey deal of mischief ; and as you are some how concerned in it, I have sent for you to help me to make reparation ; for, Lord have mercy upon me ! I am afraid I am going out of the world with a sinful weight upon my conscience !”

Richard then gave Lord Raymond a circumstantial account of his interview with the Earl, his father ; the method of revenge which had been suggested by his repentment for the cold and unfriendly reception he had met with, and finally, with his firm opinion, that the Earl had employed some of his emissaries to carry off Rosina.

“ To be sure, (added he) I had high fun with the two pompous old Grecians ! and it would have made a dog laugh to see how Don Cholerick—the Duke of what d’ye call’im, bristled up like a porcupine, when I abused his daughter to his face, and told him it was from you I got the fine description

of her; but even fun may be bought too dear! It runs strangely in my head, that the poor girl has been murdered by the villainous dogs your father sent to carry her away—for you know none but villainous dogs would be concerned in such an undertaking; and if that's the case, the sooner I get out of the world the better, for I should fancy that her innocent blood cried out against me wherever I went; and I should be so haunted night and day with my own evil conscience, that it would be a charity for any one to tie a stone about my neck, and throw me into the first horse-pond that was to be met with."

Though Richard's eloquence was not in general much calculated to excite the passions of terror and pity, or indeed any passion, except that of laughter, the effect it now produced on his auditors, was striking; in Lewis it inspired indignation, horror, pity and solicitude; Lord Raymond's compassion was also awakened, but it was surpassed by his resentment and astonishment at an eclairsissement which carried the same conviction to his mind it had already brought to Richard's. His fondness for Rosina had still baffled every attempt to subdue it; and as he could not suppose, with Richard, that his father had proceeded to such extremity, as to authorize

authorize any attempt against her life, the hope, which had so long lain dormant, began to revive in his bosom.

CHAP. XXII.

SPIRITUAL CONSOLATION.

Affectionate in look
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of peace to guilty man.

COWPER.

“**P**OOOR Rosina!” said Lewis, whilst the tears started from his eyes.

“Aye indeed, poor Rosina! (echoed Richard) and now that all’s said and done, parson Lewis, tell God’s truth and shame the devil; after this repro-

bate prank that I have been guilty of, do you think there is any chance for me in the other world."

"God forbid I should think otherwise, (returned Lewis) who shall presumptuously set bounds to a mercy which is boundless. Sinners, not the righteous are called to that repentance, of which immortal felicity is the promised reward; and from which the most atrocious guilt excludes not the returning penitent. The Almighty, though terrible in his vengeance, is slow to wrath, indulgent to human infirmity, long suffering in his mercy."

"Well, (returned Richard) I hope I may find it so."

"You have no room for despondency, (replied Lewis) when even crimes of the deepest dye, and the most enormous magnitude, may be cancelled by the humiliation of a broken and contrite spirit; shall not your errors—errors which proceeded from no depravity of heart, no predetermined malevolence, shall they not be pardoned by that paternal love, of which the parable of the prodigal son, affords so striking, and so pathetic a revelation!"

"God

“ God send ! God send ! (said Richard) but to tell you the truth, what frightens me most, is the apprehension that I shall be lop’d off before I have half time enough to repent ; for from the shocking pickle I find myself in, and the grievous pain I suffer, I don’t think I can hold out four and twenty hours. To be sure, if God in his mercy would let me live a few days longer, to work out my salvation, and prepare myself for my latter end, I might chance to come to some good.”

“ My dear young friend, (returned Lewis) you have fallen into a common error, fatally destructive to the cause of piety, that of imagining that the crimes and follies of a misspent life, may be atoned for by a late and precipitate repentance, which it is greatly to be feared, is more frequently the offspring of terror, than the fruit of contrition. A moral and religious life is the only true preparation for death.”

“ If that’s the case then, (replied Richard) I am afraid I stand but a pityful chance ; for I am sure my life has been nothing to crack of, and there is no good in a man’s blowing himself up with false music.”

“ I should

“ I should be far, (returned Lewis) from wishing to lull your apprehensions into a false security; but it belongs only to the Almighty searcher of hearts to estimate the merits of men; the degree of virtue he requires from them must be proportioned to the talents he has committed to their care; a reflection, calculated to humble the pride of human virtue, and the vanity of human wisdom. I confess to you, my young friend, when I have beheld in the streets, wretches whose depravity seemed a disgrace to their Creator, and heard their lips pour forth the horrid language of profaneness and impiety, like the proud Pharisee, I have lifted up my heart in thankfulness, to the power who had formed me different from such men; but my contempt and indignation have been arrested by the reflection, that had the wretches who were so greatly the objects of my contempt and detestation, been placed by his mysterious providence, in a situation similar to mine; had they been blessed, like me, with the advantages of good example, and religious education, they might have attained to a degree of virtue far more perfect than any I can lay claim to.”

“ That’s very true, (said Richard) and I wonder it never struck me before. May be, if it was
not

not for my old grandfather, that took it into his head to make a fool of me when I was a boy, I might have come off no worse than my neighbours."

"His weak partiality, (returned Lewis) was in all probability the source of many of your errors."

"Then, by that rule, (replied Richard) it is his soul, and not mine, that should pay for the roast in the other world. But for all that, whatever mischief the old codger might have done me, as I know it was all kindly intended, I confess to you, I would rather bear the brunt myself, and endure the punishment of my sins, however great it may be, than that one hair of his poor old white head should suffer on account of them."

"The sentiment, (returned Lewis) is pious and grateful, and you may be assured, my dear Richard, that such dispositions of the heart will not lose their merit in the sight of him, who alone knows how to appreciate, and to reward them."

"Then you think, (said Richard) that I have as much goodness in the main, as some folks who
make

make more fuss about the matter ; and may get to heaven after all ?”

“ God forbid I should doubt it, (said Lewis) and I hope too, that if it should please the Almighty to spare your life, the deep sense you now express of your errors, will effectually prevent your ever returning to them.”

“ God knows how that may be, (replied Richard) there’s a wide difference between the resolutions of a sick man, and those of a well man ; you know the proverb.”

“ The devil was sick—the devil a monk would be ;

“ The devil was well—the devil a monk was he.”

And I remember, when my poor old grandfather used to grow sick, he’d betake himself to his prayer-book, send for the parson, and fall to praying with all his might and main ; and nothing was to go forwards in the family but praying and preaching, and psalm-singing. But this happened him so often, that at last, thinking it was nothing but a false alarm, the prayer-book was returned to its shelf ; the parson, when he came, instead of being clapped down on his marrow-bones, was set up at the

back-gammon table; and egad, this was the work they were at when he went off one evening, little dreaming how soon he was to be gammon'd out and out, poor old soul!"

"Such instances occur frequently," said Lewis.

"And for that reason, (continued Richard) if with your good assistance, I could get myself any way at all fit to die, I think it would be better for me to have the job over now, than to have it to do another time, when I might be caught napping like old grandad, and taken more unawares; for to tell you the truth, I'm horribly afraid that I should fall to hankering after my old courses, if I was to recover."

Lewis, who saw much of the human heart delineated in these coarse sketches, thought the conjecture a very probable one.

The conversation was interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Stanton, who sent Gryffith to enquire whether Richard was at leisure to receive him.

C H A P. XXIII.LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF THE LITTLE
CROOKBACK.

LORD Raymond, who, during the foregoing conversation, had set, lost in his own meditations, judged this a proper opportunity to make his escape.

“As I know, my dear Richard, (said he, approaching the bed and taking his hand) that in your present situation, when you are no less agitated by mental inquietude, than tortured by bodily sufferings, nothing can so greatly contribute to the recovery of your health, as the restoration of your peace of mind; I will not lose an instant in endeavouring to remove the cause of your distress; and if, as you imagine, and I am myself somewhat inclined

clined to suspect, my father has been accessory to the concealment of Rosina, you may be assured that the effectual exertions I shall employ, will shortly procure her enlargement."

"God send! God send! (said Richard) that would be taking a grievous weight off my conscience; and so I beg that you will not stand here any longer making your fine harangues, when you may employ your time to so much better purpose. All I desire is, that as soon as you find any thing out, you'll let me know it, for I shall be as miserable until I hear from you, as if I was sitting broiling on a hot gridiron."

Lord Raymond promised an exact compliance with his request, and hastily departed. As he quitted the room Mr. Stanton entered it.

"So, my worthy master, (said Richard, reaching out his hand to him as soon as he saw him) you are come to look after your little crooked disciple—and a fine condition you find him in, with his flesh pounded to a jelly, and his bones shattered to fritters! ah, it was all my own fault! this would not have happened me, if I had rode Bet Bouncer; poor slut, I shall never cross thee again! but as
the

the devil would have it, old Slug stood ready saddled in the stable, and off I scampered like wild-fire, without either boot or spur. Aye, it's always the case! the more haste, the worst speed—but it is in vain to cry for spilled milk!”

A physician and surgeon whom Lewis had engaged to come from London, when he first received intelligence of Richard's accident, now arrived at the inn; and after the necessary examination, and the usual consultation, they perfectly agreed in the first surgeon's opinion, that nothing but the amputation of the limb, could possibly save the life of the patient.

Richard, after some preparation, was made acquainted with this decision, which he listened to with great philosophy.

“No, (said he) I'm not so fond of life, that I would purchase it on such terms. A pretty devil they'd make of me, to send me hopping through the world on one leg, like a lame magpye! my carcass is bad enough already, without suffering it to be mutilated at that rate; and if you think there is no sin in it, parson Lewis, why, in God's name, I will
let

let myself die quietly, without striving against the stream."

Lewis, who thought Richard had an undoubted right to judge for himself in this important concern, used no argument to dissuade him from a resolution, which he secretly applauded; and Richard, resolved to meet his fate, prepared for it with great resignation; and his two worthy friends said every thing that benevolence could suggest, or piety could dictate, to console him under his misfortune, and to inspire him with dispositions suitable to the awful revolution that awaited him. After sometime he entreated them to leave him alone, and calling Gryffith to him, he desired him to bring pen, ink and paper, and act as his secretary, whilst he dictated the following letter to his mother.

My dear mother,

Before this letter comes to hand, you will receive a sad account of me! after all your care, and trouble and kindness. I have made a terrible fist of myself at last. My heart bleeds to think of the uneasiness I have given you, who were always the best of mothers; and my tears, which have not fallen these three years, are running as fast as hops
down

down my cheeks, to think of the affliction that you and my dear sisters will suffer, when you hear of my unlucky and untimely end. But, my dear mother and sisters, don't fret yourselves on that account, for as I have some hope of getting to heaven through God's mercy, and the good assistance of parson Lewis, I protest to you, I am as well contented to die, as ever I was to eat my supper when I was hungry; and all that I have now to grieve for, is, because of the trouble you will feel for me, and that I didn't spend my life to better purpose when I had it; for, you know, as God sent us into this world to become better in it, and if, instead of that, we grow like small beer in summer, from bad to worse, (as folks are very apt to do, and which was very likely to be my case) you know the sooner we get out of it, the less sin we shall have to answer for; and Lord knows, I have enough on my poor soul already! (but it is a long story, and parson Lewis will tell you all about it) and moreover, after the terrible pranks I have been guilty of, and the mischief I have done, I could never think of opening my mouth in the way of laughing, or making game, as long as I lived; and to live in this world without a little fun to keep up one's spirits, would be as dull a piece of business as a man need desire.

Parson Lewis, as I said before, will tell you all my misfortunes; and only that she is a gentlewoman, as I find, and does not want a compliment of the kind from any body, I would beg of you, my dear mother, to make her a handsome present out of my fortune that will fall to you; besides, a few hundred pounds could be but a paltry recompense to a poor young woman that has been undone, as I have undone her!

I know that by my grandfather's will, you will have the disposal of all the money he left me, and I beg you will give the largest share of it to my sisters, because my brother has fortune enough already, and I am sure he won't grudge it to them, and it was always my intention to add a thousand pound a piece to their fortunes, as soon as I came of age.

I have received many kindnesses and obligations from Mr. Stanton, and I beg you will make him a present of two hundred pounds, in token of gratitude for the same; and also the like sum to parson Lewis, both on account of the kindness I bear him, and because I have heretofore been guilty of cracking many profane and reprobate jests upon the clergy.

I beg

I beg my dear sister Sophia will keep my chefnut filly, Graſshopper, for her own uſe; and I leave my bay poney, Cricket, to my ſiſter Lucy, becauſe ſhe is a more timorous horſewoman. I deſire that Bet Bouncer may be taken ſpecial care of for my brother Charles; and I beg my dear mother, out of the great love you have always borne to me, that you will keep poor old Peg Frantum, my brood mare, as long as ſhe lives, and get her fed with good maſhes night and morning, becauſe ſhe's paſt her labour, and has never a tooth in her head.

I have many other requests to make you, in regard to my horſes and hounds, and other moveables, that I would have ſhared among my old playmates and companions, but Gryffith will tell you about theſe matters by word of mouth; and I only deſire that you will ſettle him, the ſaid Gryffith, in a little farm, and give him fifty pounds to ſtock it, becauſe I have always found him a true and faithful ſervant; and likewise that Lord Raymond mayn't get ſo much as a cur that belonged to me; and I don't ſay this out of any malice or reſentment, but becauſe I know he in no wiſe deſerves it; and you may remember he uſed to have a great hankering after my brindled bitch; Tygreſs.

And

And also in regard to my funeral, I beg, that instead of making any pother about the matter, you may get me put down in the ground any how, and let the money be given in charity.

And now, my dear mother, having settled all my temporal concerns, for a short horse is soon curried, and finding myself growing faint and weak, I will take my leave of you, praying to God to bless you, and make you as happy in your other children, as you have been unfortunate in

Your affectionate,

though heretofore undutiful son,

RICHARD EVELYN.

I would desire your prayers, only that I know they would come too late to do me any service.

This letter concluded, Richard desired he might be left to his repose, but the idea of the injury he had undesignedly done Rosina, haunted his imagination, and in the evening he entreated Lewis would go to London, find Lord Raymond, and if possible bring him some information relative to the

result of his enquiries ; and Lewis, whose solicitude in respect to the fate of Rosina, was nearly equal to his own, very joyfully accepted the commission.

C H A P. XXIV.

LORD Raymond, meantime, had hurried to London, and flying directly to his noble father, informed him, without preparation or ceremony, that he had received certain information of his having carried off Rosina ; inveighed with great bitterness against the duplicity of his conduct, and insisted on being immediately made acquainted with the place of her concealment.

The Earl, who naturally concluded that some of his accomplices had betrayed him to Lord Raymond, in the view of extorting from him a reward, imagined denial to be vain, and haughtily acknowledged

ledged the justice of the accusation, but refused to throw any lights on Rosina's present situation ; and with much acrimony recriminated on the meanness of spirit, and disobedient contempt of his authority, which had necessitated him to embrace so disagreeable a measure. This retort produced an explanation : Lord Raymond very easily exculpated himself from the charges of meanness of spirit, and disobedience, by candidly confessing the nature of his views on Rosina, and pointing out to him the origin of his error in the malevolence of the little Crookback ; and this indulgent father, for the first time, felt remorse for the injury he had occasioned, not to the poor devoted Rosina, but to his son, in depriving him of the solace of so amiable a companion ; for he thought it perfectly reasonable, that he should be indulged in every gratification that interfered not with his engagements to Lady Elinor. With many indications of the deepest compunction and regret, he apologized to Lord Raymond for the error he had been led into, and added, with much vexation, that he feared the evil admitted not of reparation, as he had some reason to suppose that Rosina was, 'ere then, the wife of Tudor.

“ The wife of Tudor, (exclaimed Lord Raymond) is he then the worthy rival to whom my happiness has been sacrificed? the wretch whom you have brought forward into life, and who owes what little consequence he may possess, to the notice of this family !”

“ Moderate your transports, my dear Raymond, (said the Earl) perhaps he is not yet married—I never heard he was:—or, even at the worst, why should you despair of becoming his rival in your turn?”

“ I should think myself degraded by such a competition; (returned Lord Raymond disdainfully) but how did she fall into his power? by what means could he form such a connexion.”

The Earl gratified his Lordship’s curiosity with an authentic and circumstantial account of all his proceedings, as already related, to which he listened with much vexation and bitterness of spirit.

“ Married to Rosina ! (cried he, when the Earl had concluded) no, it is impossible : her high spirit would not stoop to a connexion, formed under such circumstances : and the woman by whom I
have

have been so lately beloved, could never bend her affections to such an object as Tudor. But he detains her in his power—it is enough—I shall find means to force him to restore her !”

The Earl, apprehensive of the effects of his resentment, used all his eloquence to vanquish it ; he entreated him to leave the conduct of the affair to himself, assuring him that, as it was most probable that Tudor was not yet married to Rosina, he entertained not the slightest doubt of being able to prevail on him to give her up ; and, in conclusion, entreated his Lordship would neither attempt to see Tudor, nor have recourse to any violent measure which would only retard the business it was designed to facilitate.

To spare himself the trouble and confusion of a personal explanation, on so disagreeable a subject, the Earl determined to write to Tudor, unfold to him the difficulties of his situation, reveal the discovery he had made, of the emptiness of his alarms in relation to Lord Raymond’s intended union with Rosina, and peremptorily insist on her being restored ; with many professions of obligation, and promises of recompence, if he complied with this

requisition, and threats of eternal displeasure, and utter forfeiture of his future favour, and retraction, as far as it lay in his power, of his past benefits, if he refused such compliance.

He dispatched this letter, no way dubious of it's success; for he blindly imputed to the minds of others, the characteristic vices of his own. He greatly prided himself on the address with which, on a recent occasion, he had bribed Tudor to rid him of Rosina, by consenting to marry her himself; and he imagined that the same motives of interest which had, as he supposed, induced him to receive that claim, would operate as powerfully in persuading him to resign it. He was, however, somewhat surprised and disappointed, at receiving, on the return of his messenger, the following answer to his elaborate epistle.

My Lord,

As I am unwilling to believe that you insult me intentionally, I will no farther reply to your letter, than absolute necessity requires. You may recollect, that though on many occasions I have acted as your agent, on one alone I condescended
to

to be your tool ; on one alone, influenced by your Lordship's rhetoric and example, I was weak enough to step aside from the broad road of integrity, into a little, dirty, winding way of cunning and deceit ; and I found the passage so difficult and painful, that I resolved never to expose myself to similar inconvenience, by a subsequent deviation.

I have been faithful to the trust reposed in me ; your aim was accomplished, and my engagements have been fulfilled. You made me the arbiter of Miss Mortimer's destiny ; I have disposed of it in the manner best calculated to ensure her happiness and my own ; and compliance with the requisition contained in your letter, is as little in my power, as it is in my inclination : and if this rejection draws after it the alienation of your Lordship's favour, I shall endeavour to submit with Christian patience, to the misfortune ; and as I shall suffer in the cause of honesty, like a true martyr, I shall esteem the persecution glorious.

I am, my Lord, &c.

HENRY TUDOR.

As Lord Raymond was once so deeply and tenderly interested in the fate of Miss Mortimer, it will doubtless gratify his benevolence to be informed, that another man has found the secret of making her as happy as his Lordship once contrived to render her miserable.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

BLOODSHED AND BATTERY.

“SO, (said the Earl, when he had perused this letter,) Tudor is refractory, I think: the fellow is insatiable in his rapacity. I was obliged to give him one bribe to induce him to take the girl, and he will now insist on another before he consents to resign her. I must talk with him myself, and bring him to reason: an open rupture must be avoided at all events: the circumstances of the affair wo’n’t so well bear public animadversion; and should it be reported to the Duke and Lady Elinor, it would give a decisive blow to all our negotiations. But leave the management of the matter entirely to my prudence, and depend on receiving a satisfactory account of it.”

K 5

But

But the jealous rage which rankled in the breast of Lord Raymond, and which was considerably augmented by Tudor's letter, particularly by the sarcasm thrown out in the postscript, was too prevalent to yield to the prudential motives of his father. Not choosing, however, to alarm him by an open avowal of his intentions, he dissembled his resentment: and, saying coldly that he believed his Lordship was in the right, he pretended business, and left him.

He flew immediately to Tudor's house, and found him at home. Such a conversation ensued as might have been expected from Lord Raymond's frame of temper, and the sentiments of mutual dislike which prevailed at the interview. Lord Raymond affected to treat Tudor with the disdain of a superior, reproached him with received obligation, and in the most authoritative tone required him to resign Rosina. Tudor, in return, repressed neither the resentment excited by this contumelious treatment, nor the sentiments of contempt which he had long felt for the principles and practice of his Lordship.

"I am reproached (said he) with the obligations conferred on me by your family. In what consists these

these obligations? Would the Earl have employed me in the conduct of his affairs, could he have found another person more punctual in attention, or more diligent in dispatch? You cannot suppose it. If I engaged in his service, was it for the barren honour that such a commission conferred on me? Certainly not. If I have received the compensation of my labour, is not the labourer worthy of his hire? And if his Lordship chose to recompense me with his interest, rather than with his money, he had doubtless his own prudential motives for the preference. In fine, my Lord, to put a period to a conversation which has already lasted too long, I will neither resign Rosina, nor give you any information relative to her destiny, farther than that she is herself perfectly satisfied with it, and with me: and were you now, in a fit of too late repentance, to lay your fortune at her feet, she would spurn your offered alliance with the scorn which your basely dishonourable designs on her have merited."

Lord Raymond, incensed past patience at this speech, and the insinuations it contained, loaded Tudor with the most opprobrious and menacing language, which he retorted with severe and pointed recrimination. The issue of this interview was

such as might have been imagined, an appointment in Hyde-Park at an early hour next morning.

In the evening Lewis arrived in town, and waited on Lord Raymond, who acquainted him, with great composure, that he had as yet been able to discover nothing more than that Rosina was in a place of safety; and added, that by ten next morning he hoped he should be able to gratify him with more certain intelligence. Lewis, little satisfied with this information, retired with a resolution of waiting to see what the ensuing morning might produce, both for Richard's satisfaction and his own.

Tudor, meantime, set about the arrangement of his affairs, in preparation for the awful event which might probably take place on the following day, and endeavoured to banish the reflection which reproached his guilty rashness, and to stifle the remorse which would have disarmed his ferocity. In this avocation he was interrupted by the receipt of Rosina's letter.

"Yes," cried he, repeating aloud the latter sentence of the letter,—“may those virtues be crowned with immortal honour and felicity in that blessed

blest region, where, I trust, you will one day meet your Rosina.'—"Yes, Rosina, I will meet you there, and sooner, perhaps, than you expect to see me! But what do I say,—that we shall meet! O, vain presumption! far distant must be the sphere congenial with thy spirit, best and loveliest of human creatures! a virgin saint, a martyr to honour! far distant must be thy future residence from that of the guilty wretch, who rushes, with rebellious violence, into the presence of an offended and avenging God!"

His soliloquies were interrupted by the return of the servant whom he had sent to charge his pistols. He shuddered at the view of these fatal weapons; but the unconquerable prejudices he had imbibed in the world, soon recovered their pernicious influence. Stimulated, not by the thirst of vengeance, but the fear of shame, he determined to rush onwards, and to drown the murmurs of conscience in the tide of dissipation, he resolved to pass the night with a set of choice spirits of his acquaintance, whose request to this purpose he had before refused.

In this society he felt himself distracted, rather than relieved: the lights dazzled his eyes; the
peals,

peals of laughter resounded in his ears; but the pleasantry that excited them reached not his apprehension; and the wine, though it dissipated his ideas, neither drowned the sense of horror that shuddered in his blood, nor quenched the remorse that rankled in his bosom. At the first dawn of light he sought the appointed place with one of his associates, whom he had engaged for his second, and they awaited not long the arrival of Lord Raymond.

The ceremonies were soon adjusted: but one shot was exchanged: Tudor received a wound in his left arm; but his own more-fatal ball seemed to pass through the head of his antagonist, and he fell lifeless on the earth. Tudor, though covered with his own blood, was the first to fly to Lord Raymond's assistance.

His Lordship, ever attentive to his own safety, had provided himself with a surgeon; and this person, on examining the wound, found that the ball had gone through the jaw-bone, which it had fractured dreadfully, and forced itself a passage under the ear.

The

The blood was staunched, and Lord Raymond was put into his carriage, which attended, and conveyed to his own house, where he was followed by Tudor, who seemed insensible to his own danger, and deaf to the remonstrances of his second. Here they found Lewis waiting to see Lord Raymond. In the general consternation they all attended him to his chamber. When the wound was dressed, he opened his eyes, and perceived Tudor hanging over him; and though the nature of his hurt deprived him of the power of articulation, he turned them from him with a rage and horror, that sufficiently indicated his feelings.

“ I read your aversion to me in your countenance, (said Tudor;) but you abhor me not more than I abhor myself, than I execrate the pride and obstinacy which yesterday refused you the explanation you required of me. Accept it now. Rosina is safe. I loved her; but she rejected my tenderness. Her happiness was more dear to me than fortune, fame, or favour: I released her from captivity, and restored her to her friends.”

To

To all but Lord Raymond and Lewis this address was an enigma. The former listened with some symptoms of satisfaction, and the latter heard it with delighted attention and astonishment.

As it was known that messengers had been dispatched to apprize the Earl of his son's situation, Tudor's friend became extremely apprehensive, lest this incensed father, in the first transports of his indignation, should have him immediately arrested, and earnestly solicited him to provide for his safety by flight; and his entreaties and remonstrance were so warmly seconded by Lord Raymond's friend and the surgeon, that he was at length persuaded to yield to them. But Lewis, though an utter stranger to him, was too deeply interested in the fate of Rosina, to suffer him to depart, without obtaining some farther information in respect to her.

“Forgive the liberty I take, (said he, as he followed him down stairs :) my name is Lewis. I knew Rosina; I esteemed her worth; I lamented her misfortunes.”

“I have

"I have heard her mention you, (replied Tudor, hastily turning to him,) and with regard. You are my countryman. Come with me."

Lewis accepted the invitation, and got with Tudor and his friend into the carriage that waited for them; and as it drove rapidly to Tudor's house, he gave Lewis a very brief account of the means by which Rosina had fallen into his power, and received from him, in return, a detail of the circumstances which had revealed the transaction to Lord Raymond's knowledge.

CHAP. XXVI.

THE LITTLE CROOKBACK MAKES HIS EXIT.

Le renard meura dans sa peau.

TUDOR expressed his design of instantly taking the road to Dover, and on his arrival at his own house; Lewis, impatient to communicate the joyful intelligence he had received to Richard, parted from him with many sincere and ardent wishes for his happiness.

Tudor went to his apartment, in the intention of providing himself with money for his journey.
On

On his bureau he found Rosina's letter, which he read once more.

"And why direct my flight to France! (said he;) Why not to Ireland, where friendship and humanity solicit my presence; where I may yet restore Rosina to life and happiness!"

The design was no sooner conceived than embraced. Concealing from every one but the friend who had been the companion of his adventure, and who still remained with him, the true place of his destination, he directed his route to Ireland, and had no sooner set his foot on the Hibernian shore, than, in the ardour of his solicitude for Rosina's preservation, he had flown to the house of Mrs. Fitzosborne.

Lewis, meantime, had no sooner parted from Tudor, than he had set out on his return to Richard, who, though now almost exhausted, still continued to labour under equal anxiety on Rosina's account. Lewis, conscious that his little friend possessed not that delicacy of feeling which requires to be treated with much gentleness or circumspection, acquainted him simply with the circumstances which had occurred since their separation,

paration, and the information he had received from Tudor.

“ God bless that noble Welshman, whoever he is, (cried Richard,) and speed him on his journey! I would give half of the few remaining hours I have to live, to have the satisfaction of giving him one hearty shake by the hand: and I beg, Parson Lewis, that you will tell my mother that I charge her on my death-bed, to send him Nimrod and Bobadil, my two best hunters; and he should have Bet Bouncer herself, only I have promised her to my brother; for if any man in England deserves to be well mounted, he does. Poor little Rosy! So she has got home safe and sound at last! God be praised, and the devil thank his Lordship! But he has been paid for his tricks at last, and the devil mend him. To be sure, I should have been sorry he had been killed outright; but as to his remaining a little or so chop-fallen for the rest of his life, why it will only put a spoke in his wheel, spoil his knack at *speechifying*, and prevent him from taking folks in, and making cats’ paws of them, with his French compliments. Aye, it’s all for the best; only it is not so well that Square-toes should come off scot-free. I wish with all my heart our brave taffy had contrived to deposit
another

another of his leaden pills in the old curmudgeon's muzzle."

"In the misfortune of his son, (replied Lewis,) he will find a sufficient punishment. Besides, my dear Richard, I am afraid this exultation in the calamities of those who have offended you, is little consistent with that spirit of christian charity which you ought so peculiarly to cherish at this season."

"Nay, (returned Richard,) as to that matter, there's no preaching people out of their seven senses. If I said what I said of the stingy old hunks, it was not out of any spite I bear him, as ill as he treated me; but justice is justice; and it's no rule, that, because I am going out of the world myself, I should not wish a halter to a knave that deserves it. But I feel myself quite worn out, Parson Lewis; come kneel down, and say a few prayers for me. I thought your good news had brought me to life again; but I am like a snuff of candle, in one minute, and out the next. Aye, I shall soon be extinguished for good and all!"

Richard's

Richard's prediction was accomplished the same night at twelve o'clock. Lewis sent off his remains to be deposited in the family burial-place, and with a heavy heart took the road to Wales, whither his letters had already conveyed to Mrs. Evelyn the intelligence of her son's misfortune.

CHAP. XXVII.

POETICAL JUSTICE ADMINISTERED.

MRS. FITZOSBORNE and her son listened with astonishment to Tudor's relation, and applauded his prudence in concealing Richard's unhappy accident, and his own duel with Lord Raymond, from Rosina. They persuaded him to retire early to rest; and when he quitted them, they returned to Rosina's apartment, where a scene took place beyond description tender and affecting. Rosina received with tears of silent sensibility the endearing congratulations and fond caresses of her
lover

lover and her friend, and only found her utterance to speak of Tudor. Fitzosborne, whose jealous anxieties were now lost in a happy security, joined in his praise with a generous enthusiasm; and they spent the greatest part of the night in concerting measures to recompense him for the sacrifices he had made, and repair his fortune without offending his delicacy.

“ I would fain fix him here amongst us, (said Fitzosborne;) but I know a spirit such as his would spurn at the offer of pecuniary assistance, and I have no interest at court to procure him an establishment suitable to his merit.”

“ Nor ever will, (returned Mrs. Fitzosborne,) until you change your political principles: but money properly applied may answer the same purpose; you shall purchase a place for this noble Welshman, and persuade him you have obtained it by your influence.”

Fitzosborne and Rosina were delighted with this project: it was agreed that Tudor should be introduced to Mr. Fitzosborne, senior, as a person with whom his son had contracted a friendship abroad; and it was not doubted, that that gentleman's

tleman's credit and exertions might greatly contribute to facilitate the plan they had meditated; though it would be necessary to keep him in utter ignorance of the source the purchase-money was to proceed from.

Lady Bell Beauchamp was next day informed of the events which had occurred, and invited to participate in the happiness of the friends in whose afflictions she had so generously sympathized. She was introduced to Tudor; and the similar generosity of their minds gave birth to the most lively sentiments of mutual esteem and admiration.

Austin was not forgotten in this general joy; he was summoned from Belle-vue to partake of it, and received by Fitzosborne and Rosina with the affection of children. They seated him between them, and Fitzosborne acquainted him with their intended union.

"Lord be praised! (cried Austin,) Lord be praised! Did I ever think to see such a joyful day as this, when we were in that pitiful bit of a cabin, as a body may call it, a-toiling and moiling, and could hardly keep the wolf from the door."

"Well,

“ Well, my dear Austen, (said Rosina,) you are no longer angry with me for not consenting to marry Sir Gregory. You will acknowledge I have made a better choice.”

“ O, don't say no more on that head, (cried Austen.) You know I was not a fortune-teller to foresee what was to come to pass. Not that Sir Gregory is to be named on the same day with his honour; but then, as we were in such a shabby sort of condition like, and he being a clever portly gentleman, and talking me up, as he did, with his fine houses and furniture, and the ladies that were in love with him, and all the money he had, and how daintily you were to be fed and cloathed, and all to that, why it was no great wonder that I should, in a manner, cotton to him a little or so; and I hope (turning to Fitzosborne) that your honour ben't angry with me for so doing, and likewise Miss Rosina, for I'm sure if I had know'd that you had any hankering after one another, it would have been the least of my thoughts to go for to put between you in any shape in life.”

Fitzosborne, after assuring the good old man of his perfect forgiveness, acquainted him with Rosina's resolution of settling a hundred a-year upon

him for the remainder of his life, and consulted his inclinations in respect to his future residence. But Austin protested that he had no higher ambition than to be continued in his present employment at Belle-vue, and permitted to spend the rest of his life there, where he should see them oftener than in any other place.

“ And who knows (added he) but it may please the Lord to prosper your honour’s undertakings, and I may nurse your children on my knees, as I used to nurse my noble master, Captain Mortimer’s. Ah, if he was alive at this day !”

When Mr. Fitzosborne, senior, was informed by his son of his ~~engagement~~ with Rosina, he coldly assented to a measure which he was conscious he wanted influence to prevent. And, as the life of more than usual hurry and dissipation he had for some time led, had considerably impaired his constitution, he declared his intention of passing the remainder of the winter, and the ensuing spring, in the south of France; a plan to which young Fitzosborne offered no opposition, though he regarded it as rather originating in his father’s desire of avoiding to witness an alliance that was

disagreeable, than in any benefit he hoped to derive from it to his health.

Tudor, meantime, had received letters from London, which brought him intelligence, that, though Lord Raymond's life was out of danger, the consequences of their duel had been very fatal, as his jaw-bone had been shattered in such a manner, as not only extremely to injure his appearance, but, which he esteemed a much heavier calamity, by greatly affecting his articulation, to deprive him of that bewitching eloquence, and those powerful arts of persuasion, on which he so highly valued himself, and which were the foundation to his magnificent expectations of future influence and greatness.

As Rosina's spirits were now judged strong enough to bear the relation, she was made acquainted with the circumstances, of which, on Tudor's arrival, it had been thought necessary to keep her ignorant. The unhappy catastrophe of poor Richard cost her many tears; and whilst her sensibility compassionated the misfortune of Lord Raymond, she could not but revere the justice of the dispensation that deprived him of a talent, which, though adapted to conduce to the noblest purposes,

purposes, had by him been prostituted to the vilest.

When vice, by its unsuccessful subterfuges, mines a pit-fall for itself, our aversion is lost in the ruin that involves it, and compassion succeeds to hatred. The situation of Lord Raymond was now truly pitiable. His late adventure had put a final period to his hopes of an alliance with Lady Elinor. Hard as was his heart, Rosina had made on it a deep impression; her idea, with the certainty of the fortune she was now possessed of, and which the busy tongue of rumour had not failed to report to his ears with aggravated splendour, recurred to his memory with incessant and unavailing regret, and augmented the bitter sensations of his bosom, already corroded by the consciousness of diminished consequence, and the stings of disappointed ambition.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

A DEATH AND BURIAL.

WHILST Mr. Fitzosborne the elder was making the necessary preparations for his journey, and had even appointed an early day for his departure, he was seized with a putrid fever, which at that period raged in Dublin with a terrifying malignity. The event of the disorder was not long doubtful; on the third day it was fatal to his life. Though the character of Mr. Fitzosborne had precluded that excess of sorrow, and tenderness of regret, which the recollection of more liberality of mind and gentleness of manners would have naturally called forth in the bosoms of his wife and son, they were both most sensibly afflicted at this unexpected calamity. Mrs. Fitzosborne,

with that generous sensibility which is ever disposed to soften and forget the offences of those who can offend no more, now severely reproached herself with the negligence with which she had treated, and the indifference which she had felt for him, whose unkind severity had been the sole cause of her alienation. She aggravated her own foibles in the extenuation of his faults; and young Fitzosborne, in the fervor of filial piety, and the tenderness of filial sorrow, forgot he had ever had any; and whilst Rosina fondly sympathized in the affliction of Fitzosborne, they both ceased to remember that all their former sufferings had originated in the avarice and caprice of him who now was the object of their regret and lamentation.

In the friendship and society of Lady Bell and Tudor, they found a true source of consolation. Every unreasonable transport of sorrow was combated by their good sense, and every returning gleam of pleasure was brightened by their vivacity. In Mr. Nettleby they found a comforter of a different stamp. Mr. Fitzosborne's death had supplied a new and striking illustration of his favourite doctrine of contingencies, and he failed not to enlarge on it with his accustomed prolixity.

“ No

"No wonder, (cried he, bursting one day with his usual abruptness into Mrs. Fitzosborne's apartment, where our little circle sat gravely conversing together,) no wonder for Job to exclaim that his days were swifter than a weaver's shuttle! for Solomon, that paragon of wisdom to proclaim aloud, that all is vanity and vexation! and for righteous David to assert that man walketh in a vain shadow! Behold now a new instance of the fragility of human attainments, and the instability of the foundations on which mankind erect their hopes of prosperity, exemplified in the fate of my hopeful nephew, Harry Hume! Lady Flora, spite of all the means of prevention we have had recourse to, and some of them too were of the most expensive nature, has kept her word, and departed this mortal life at three this morning. What is the loss that your family has recently sustained in comparison to this which mine has suffered! Yet, you see, I support this severe calamity with becoming dignity and due decorum."

"Your resignation is undoubtedly very edifying and meritorious, (said Lady Bell,) considering the tender affection you professed for poor Lady Flora whilst she lived."

“ I understand your sneer, (returned the old man.) I never either felt or professed any affection for the little worthless reptile, and would not have cared a rush how soon she had gone to the devil, so as her property had but staid behind her. But there lies the difference between her death, and that of my poor dear departed friend, Mr. Fitzosborne, which, so far from being any disadvantage to his family, must in the end be a very considerable saving to it, by preventing him from squandering those heavy sums of money which were annually allotted to the purpose of entertaining and regaling a set of riotous and reprobate companions, to whose dangerous society and pernicious guidance he latterly entirely abandoned himself, and whose wanton revelries and luxurious carousals were the prime sources of his untimely decease. Whereas, the death of Lady Flora, instead of being the slightest emolument to her husband, as in reason and conscience it ought, puts it absolutely and totally out of the power of any contingency or casualty whatsoever, to vest in him any proportion of the lands, tenements, and hereditaments, which descended to her by right hereditary, and which, she being dead, and consequently no longer in a capacity to possess them,

them, will now devolve on the next of kin: to the great distress and detriment of said husband, who has nothing left to console him for the heavy mortgages with which her extravagance has loaded his estate, but the barren honour of having been married to an earl's daughter, forsooth !”

But in the enumeration of Mr. Hume's grievances, the old gentleman had omitted one of the most material,—a severe fit of the gout, by which himself had lately been attacked, and which seemed to promise a renovation of his existence, and given him, as he himself expressed, “ a new lease of his life.”

C H A P. XXIX.**TREATIES OF MARRIAGE. CONCLUSION.**

Gay hope is theirs, by fancy led,
Let's pleasing when possess.

GRAY.

BUT however shocking to the feelings of his family the sudden death of Mr. Fitzosborne might have been, it was not one of those events which leave a deep and lasting impression on the mind, and render it unsusceptible of enjoyment and consolation. A short time sufficed to dispel their gloomier sensations, and their feelings seemed to
awaken

awaken from this interval of dejection to a livelier sense of their mutual tenderness and mutual felicity. The union of Fitzosborne and Rosina was necessarily deferred till the approaching spring; and this delay, by affording them leisure to become more intimately acquainted with each other's character, increased the esteem and admiration of both, particularly of Rosina, who now beheld in Fitzosborne the only man she had ever truly loved. In this interim, when, too happy to seek amusement abroad, they devoted their time almost entirely to each other, and to a few of their most valued and intimate friends, many plans of benevolence were adopted, and many indications of gratitude were resolved on. Rosina forgot not the friends of her adversity: she determined after her union to revisit her cottage, and return her personal acknowledgments to Mrs. Evelyn and her daughters, and her old landlady, the good Mrs. Jenkins. For her friend Lewis she meditated a reward more expressive of her gratitude than empty professions of obligation; and Fitzosborne promised to procure for him, either by interest or money, a beneficial preferment in the church.

The

The establishment of Tudor's fortune was now their only anxiety; and on this subject their sollicitudes were of short duration, as they soon perceived that a strong mutual attachment had taken place between him and Lady Bell; an attachment that had at first originated in admiration of each other's worth, and was afterwards cemented by an uniformity of taste, and similar nobleness of mind. Tudor almost adored her for that use of riches which others of her admirers had censured as prodigality. He exulted far more in the virtues, than he rejoiced in the fortune of her he loved; and her judgment ratified the choice of her heart: in giving him her hand, she was conscious she secured to herself a tender and generous friend, and to her orphan wards a kind and faithful protector.

“ I verily believe (said Tudor to Lady Bell) that had I met you and this little Rosina together in the world, the voluntary homage of my heart would have been your's: but my passion for her was an act of necessity, not of choice; for, mewed up together as we were in that solitary tower, I had no possibility of escape. I must have been the most hard-natured and discourteous of all knights,

if,

if, in such a situation, I had failed to offer the sacrifice of my vows at the altar of her beauty. But I now assure you, upon my honour, (turning to Rosina,) that I heartily thank you for the cold severity which has left me at liberty to devote them entirely to her ladyship."

"At least, (said Rosina,) you do well to make a virtue of a necessity."

"I think so too, (said Lady Bell, laughing :) however, he has in reality no reason to regret a passion which disclosed to my observation the qualities that first interested my attention, and fixed my esteem. Believe me, Tudor, so far from being jealous of your preference of Rosina, had you not loved her, I should never have loved you."

This event alone was wanting to complete the happiness of Fitzosborne, Rosina, and their beloved mother.

And now, having conducted our amiable heroine to this crisis, we will leave her to the enjoyment of as much felicity as is, perhaps, com-

patible with the imperfection of humanity. Consummate happiness is an angelic form, which seldom, if ever, descends from her native region, to grace the dwellings of men; and that period is possibly the brightest when the seraphic vision seems to hover full in view, and the enjoyment of the present hour is animated by still fairer prospects of future felicity.

6 MA 35

FINIS.

JUST PUBLISHED,

Price 6s. sewed,

T H E O D O R E :

A DOMESTIC TALE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

—Sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,

AT THE

Minerva-Press,

LEADENHALL-STREET.

M.DCC.XCII.

JUST PUBLISHED,
Price 9s. sewed,
THE
FILLE DE CHAMBRE,
A NOVEL,
IN THREE VOLUMES,

BY THE AUTHOR OF THE INQUISITOR, &c. &c.

The highest wish I ever form'd has been,
Just to be plac'd above the reach of want,
In the blest medium between shining state,
And the hard griping hand of penury.
Enough for this, and, if I have to spare
A little for my suff'ring fellow creatures,
I shall have reach'd the height of my ambition.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM LANE,
AT THE
Signer's,
LEADENHALL-STREET.

M DCC XCH.

